CHANGE AND EXCHANGE IN THE HOME

Meanings and Motivations of Home and Sharing Among Finnish Airbnb Hosts

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction

In contemporary Western culture, there is a common idea of home as a fixed place for living (Johansson & Saarikangas 2009: 14). Following this idea, home could be taken to be the opposite of travelling. You leave home when you go on a vacation; on a vacation you meet new people, learn new things, see new sights and get new perspectives. Then you return home and it feels good to be there where everything is familiar – where you belong. Airbnb, an American company that runs an online booking platform for lodging, has turned this idea around: "Belong anywhere" their slogan promises. Airbnb offers homes away from home as suggested by the title of the list of spaces for rent: "Homes" (Chesky 2016). For travelers, renting a full-equipped room or an apartment less expensive than a hotel may seem like an obvious choice. But what about the hosts? What makes them rent their homes for strangers? On its website, Airbnb itself offers this kind of answer:

> *"Airbnb uniquely leverages technology to economically empower millions of people around the world to unlock and monetize their spaces, passions and talents to become hospitality entrepreneurs."* (Airbnb Press Room, About Us).

In other words, Airbnb promises the hosts, first and foremost, more income and a fancy title. However, I want to know what motivates the hosts in their own opinion: why do they share their home and what does *home* mean to them. Airbnb was founded in 2008 by three friends who needed money for rent. The original name "Airbed & Breakfast" comes from the air mattresses that the first guests were sleeping on. Now the company known as Airbnb offers more than 6 million places to stay in 191 countries. (Airbnb Press Room, About Us.) Since 2008, not just the volume has changed. The CEO of MaRa, The Finnish Hospitality Association, Timo Lappi commented on the professionalization of Airbnb hosting to Yle:

> *"Airbnb has grown in every big city. In the same time it is getting more professional and has changed from peer-to-peer and sharing economy to professional activity where an investor buys several high-rise apartments and pursues full-fledged hotel business instead of setting up a hotel"* (Koivuranta, March 29 2018, translated from Finnish by me).

It is quite clear why some property owners with extra capital might want to engage in Airbnb hosting as Lappi portrays it. However, a lot of hosting is still also done by

"ordinary" people who share their homes with travelers. Even if Airbnb in its advertisement portrays hosting as an efficient way for making money, it is worth asking is this really the only, or even the main, reason that induces people to share their home with strangers. Renting out the whole apartment or house can be extremely profitable, but the same can't be said about single rooms rented out for 29€ a night. According to Guttentag et al (2018), from all the Airbnb guests participating in their Canada-based study, 70% rented the whole apartment and 30% either shared the apartment with the owner(s) or other guests. Turned around, less than 30 per cent of hosts stay at their homes while they are renting them out. In the city of Oulu, Finland, where most of my research participants live, from little over 300 homes, only 51 listings are "private rooms" (Airbnb/Oulu). This means that over 80 per cent of the hosts in Oulu practice "remote hospitality" (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015), and are not present during the guest's stay. It could be questioned if the majority of "homes" on Airbnb are *homes* at all, or perhaps means for pursuing "full-fledged hotel business instead of setting up a hotel" like Lappi commented on the citation above (Koivuranta March 29 2018).

This brings us to the question of what is "home". *What* is this home that is rented out? Home in the contemporary West is often referred to as "the private sphere" (Miller 2001: 1) and most of the people I have discussed Airbnb with in my daily life find the idea of sharing one's home on Airbnb uncomfortable and even abhorrent. As a person who uses Airbnb as a guest and would love to host, I find this ostensible contradiction of sharing a private space with strangers fascinating. In this master's thesis, I will concentrate on the minority of hosts on Airbnb, who share their homes with strangers while occupying them at the same time – the "on-site hospitality" (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015). While executing the same way of hosting that the founders of the company started with, this minority of hosts is rarely studied. There seems to be a perception as Lappi's above, that all Airbnb hosts are professionals. I want to bring focus to the "ordinary" people who share their homes with strangers.

1.1 Research Problem and Questions

My research aim is to examine how the touristic sharing economy, through Airbnb hosting, shapes the meanings the hosts give to "home", what motivates the hosts to share their

"homes" with strangers, and how they manage the changes sharing might bring. My research questions are:

1. What meanings Airbnb hosts give to "home"?
2. What are hosts' reasons for taking part in Airbnb hosting?
3. Does hosting change the home or its meanings somehow and if so, how do hosts manage such changes?

The first question aims to find out what "home" is to the hosts; is the dwelling they are sharing a *home* at all, do hosts perhaps have several homes, or is *home* something immaterial to them? This is important when talking about *sharing* home: what exactly is it that the hosts are sharing? To help me answer this question, I compare the research participants' answers to previous studies regarding meanings of home. This is to see, if the hosts' answers differ greatly from the answers of people, who do not use Airbnb.

The second question focuses on what motivates hosts to share their homes. If the home is understood as a "private sphere" like Miller (2001:1) has stated, why would someone ever consider welcoming a total stranger to stay there? "Money" is the answer most people offer me when I ask them. However, Bialski (2016) writes: "One will never find a clear economic logic in such exchanges as Airbnb or other sharing transactions, but rather there are many more cultural logics involved" (Bialski 2016: 42). The second research question aims to bring these logics to the surface.

The third question concentrates on the relation between home and Airbnb hosting. Hosting inarguably changes the home at least by adding new people to the familiar space. Most likely, it also brings material changes in forms of new sheets and towels. But does it also change how the home feels? Or the behavior of the inhabitants? I want to find out if and how the hosting affects home and its meanings. Together these three questions aim to examine the relation between the meanings of home and the practices of Airbnb hosts.

1.2 Earlier Study

Home is not an uncommon study subject in anthropology. However, there has been a "persistent gap between the centrality of home to most of human life, and its peripheral position within most social science" (Samanani & Lenhard 2019: 1). When the big old names in anthropology studied indigenous cultures in Trobriand Islands, Samoa or Sudan the dwellings were also under scrutinization if not the focal point of the studies. At first, the home was understood as "just" the locus of daily life and rituals, the container for social relations or a symbol indicating particular cultural beliefs. Later it has been studied as a social process itself, shaping and grounding our lives. (Samanani & Lenhard 2019: 2-4.)

Social anthropologists Mary Douglas (1991: 289, 295, 307) has written about the home as a social structure situated in space and time, in the present but anticipating the future, but most importantly serving the inhabitants. She separates the home from a hotel, nursing home or health farm through its meanings and logics; it is a community, which functions based on "fairness", not market economy and economic gain. Douglas' work is a great example of explaining and giving meaning to the home only through its functions as a container of social processes. She pays no mind to the material aspects of home, and her work implicitly distinguishes *home* from a *house,* even if this is not expressed explicitly.

A markedly different point of view to the home can be found in Daniel Miller's work (2001). Anthropologist Daniel Miller has studied the material culture of the home. According to him, our homes tell a great deal about us: our memories, social relations, and biographies are interwoven in the material things of our homes. Miller also sees material culture as central to our wider relationship with society, and writes about the active participation of our material homes in the construction our lives, calling it "estate agency" (Miller 2001: 112). We express ourselves and our identity through material things and when we can't for example afford something, or get rid of something we don't like in our homes, instead of us possessing our material homes, the material comes to possess or "haunt" us (Miller 2001: 110). To me, this is one of the more fascinating ideas of his.

Some other interesting explorations of the home include being at home away from home (for example Jackson 1995), homelessness and home-making (Kellett & Moore 2003; Dovey 1985) and home-in-process, lost homes, and nostalgia in context of migration and

refugees (Brun & Fábos 2015). These works shift focus from the material structures and typically western ideas of homes as privately owned dwellings to the home as a "name for the on-going efforts and dreams of people to secure a place or sense of belonging in the world, something felt, lived, imagined, or struggled for." (Samanani & Lenhard 2019: 8-9).

In social sciences and humanities, the home has been studied from many other diverse perspectives: gender, equality, domestic violence, home insurance, decoration, architecture, diaspora, homes in suburbs, the Internet, and different time periods just to mention a few (Joutseno et al 2009). In the area of architecture, there is understandably a wide range of studies regarding home and its meanings. From this pool of studies, Després (1993) gives an interesting account regarding shared housing and meanings of home. In an attempt to scout for new housing solutions, she goes to look for motives for shared housing and finds that the habitants are often in a transitional point in their lives: just left their childhood homes, divorced or widowed (Després 1993: 6). She also concludes that to her research participants, sharing a home with unrelated adults does not disturb the feelings of being-at-home (Després 1993: 5).

Like Després' study above shows, home sharing is not a phenomenon that has arisen with Airbnb and the sharing economy. Until the suburban ideology and the western nuclear family, the house was shared with boarders, servants, apprentices, grand-parents, other more distant family members and even the poor, the homeless, and the mentally disabled (Després 1993: 2). In his book *An anthropological study of hospitality: The inn keeper and the guest,* Amitai Touval (2017) puts his stays in a German inn in 1996, and in an Airbnb home in the same city in 2015 side by side and gives an interesting review of both of the experiences. His work also places Airbnb on a historical continuum of hospitality and home sharing, taking it down from the pedestal of creating something totally new.

The sharing economy, which Airbnb is part of, is a relatively new term, added in the Oxford English Dictionary in 2015 as "an economic system in which assets or services are shared between private individuals, either for free or for fee, typically by means of the Internet" (Habibi et al 2016; Lexico.com). Studies on the sharing economy include research done on different platforms such as Zipcar car sharing (Bardhi & Eckhardt 2012) and

Couchsurfing home sharing (Schuckert, Peters & Pilz 2018), the providers' motivations (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015), and users' and provider's interactions (Touval 2017). Both economists (Botsman & Rogers 2010) and tourism researchers (Russo & Richards 2016) are predicting the future impacts of sharing economy on more traditional ways of consumption and travel, respectively, seeing sharing economy platforms as a competition.

Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) study is especially interesting to my thesis, because it examines Airbnb hosts in Finland, includes both "remote" and "on-site" hospitality (hosts that do not stay with guests during their visit i.e., more businesslike hosting, and hosts that stay at home and share their space and time), and deals with hosts' both financial and social motivations. They use the term "network hospitality" when referring to "the social interaction and the exchange of accommodation that occur via hospitality-exchange systems" (Lampinen and Ikkala 2015: 1033). Lampinen and Ikkala (2015) conclude that hosts' financial and social motivations that drive them to monetize network hospitality need not to be "contradictory with one another" (2015: 1039), and also hosts who practice "remote hospitality" have social motives, not just "on-site" hosts (2015: 1038).

In anthropology, and other related fields of study, a lot of attention has been given to questions that seek to understand to what extent the sharing economy is actually about *sharing* and whether it really differs from commodity exchange (Schor & Attwood-Charles 2017). Business academic Russel Belk (2014b) challenged the "sharing" in sharing economy, calling for example Airbnb and Uber "pseudo-sharing". Belk argues that many commodity exchanges disguise themselves in the vocabulary of sharing creating a "wolf-in-sheep's-clothing phenomenon whereby commodity exchange and potential exploitation of consumer co-creators present themselves in the guise of sharing" (Belk 2014b: 7).

In addition to its other objectives, my thesis brings attention to the fact, that actual sharing does occur in Airbnb hosting, not just pseudo-sharing like Belk (2014b) puts it, even if I do not disagree with Belk's criticism on using sharing vocabulary with large for-profit companies like Airbnb. On the contrary, I see the sharing vocabulary similar to the notion

of greenwashing[1], where certain vocabulary or branding are used to create an illusion of something that is actually not real. However not all Airbnb users rent their homes out for high profit, and this minority is also worth studying.

The sharing economy, without the 2015 Oxford definition attached to it, has a much longer history in anthropological studies. Marcel Mauss' *The Gift* (1925/1970) is a classic work on gift exchange and, arguably, on sharing. Marshall Sahlins (1972) deals with sharing under the name of reciprocity. Anthropologist Thomas Widlok (2017), however, has made an attempt to make sharing distinct from gift exchange, reciprocity and exchange. He defines sharing as "the social practice of enabling access to what is valued on the basis of shared demands"(Widlok 2017: xvii) and argues that none of the other modes of allocation take into account the *shared demands* aspect of his definition.

One specific aspect of the sharing economy is Airbnb home sharing. Anthropological studies about Airbnb include work on the relationship between hosts and guests (Touval 2017), loneliness as a motivation to participate in Airbnb hosting (Farmaki & Stergiou 2019), and autoethnographic accounts of feelings of homeliness (Roelofsen 2018). Cultural geographer Maartje Roelofsen applies performance theory in her work to discover how both Airbnb hosts and guests take part in home making. She uses her own experiences as an Airbnb guest in Sofia, Bulgaria, and finds that her and her hosts' performance together with other aspects (decoration, room temperature etc.) did in fact create feelings of unhomeliness – opposite to Airbnb company's "promise" of feeling at home away from home (Roelofsen 2018: 24, 37).

This master's thesis expands on this previous work to bring new insights into academic knowledge about home, sharing and exchange that importantly consider a widespread mode of contemporary human encounter. Firstly it expands on Lampinen and Ikkala's work on host's motivations to take part in Airbnb hosting by diving deeper into social motives.

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[1] For a more radical opinion on this, see Anthony Kalamar, "Sharewashing is the New Greenwashing," OpEd News, May 13, 2013, http://www.opednews.com/articles/Sharewashing-is-the-New-Gr-by-Anthony-Kalamar-130513-834.html.

Secondly, it adds to existing work on the meanings of home with a fresh point of view of Airbnb hosts, asking, if home means something different to these home sharers. Thirdly, it adds the question of change in the study of an Airbnb home. The change which hosting brings to everyday life, the meanings of home and even the material home, has not been covered in earlier studies.

1.3 Reflexivity and Ethics

Ethics should be considered throughout the whole research, from the formation of research problem to the final report and everything in between (Madden 2010: 33). It is important to predict possible ethical issues and conflicts from the beginning, and to form or change the research plan accordingly (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2019). One such issue in my thesis is taking photographs of research participants' homes, and I solved it by asking the participants to take the pictures themselves. This gives them the power to decide which parts of their homes become visible to the readers of my thesis.

Anonymity, honesty and informed consent are basics that first come to mind when thinking of ethics in research, and are important values to me personally. Other more complex ethical dilemmas exist, for example the use and misuse of the results, ownership of data, and advocacy (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2019). In this work, concrete acts of avoiding ethical conflicts include creating pseudonyms for the research participants when they wished not to appear with their own names, and not giving away too personalized information about the hosts or their apartments, for example participants' exact age or the neighborhood they live in. These acts, and the signing of an informed consent form, where the aim of the research is explained, aim to protect the research participants.

Design anthropologist Sarah Pink (2007) has written extensively of the methods of visual ethnography and her notions on privacy, ethics and reflexivity have guided my work. Reflexivity is in a way reaction to the acknowledgement that the world is subjective. In the contemporary view in anthropology and ethnography, the researcher sees the research participant through his or her own subjectivity, and the research participant sees the world through his or hers. Reflexivity is a way to acknowledge these double subjectivities by

making the researcher's decision-making, motives and biases transparent and recognizing the researchers' impact on the data created in the moment. (Pink 2007: 23)

In addition, different elements of one's identity might become significant; "[f]or example, gender, age, ethnicity, class and race are important to how researchers are situated and situate themselves in ethnographic contexts" (Pink 2007: 24). In this master's thesis, the elements of identity that might be restrictive are age and gender. This is due to the fact that other mentioned elements are similar to the research participants own and therefore should not create a conflict or power imbalance. Only relatively young age and half the time different gender are the exceptions. It is possible that the interviewees censored their answers if they thought I would not understand for example the meaning of having kids in an Airbnb home because I am too young, single or do not have children. This might have also happened if the interviewee wished to present a certain picture of him/herself or in an old-fashioned way thought that some things are not for young women to hear. However, such traits of identity that Pink mentions cannot be changed and the best the researcher can do is to acknowledge these possibilities and be open about them.

Impartiality, explained by Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2009: 135-136) is another factor that should be taken into account when doing ethically "good" research: does the researcher's gender, age, religion, political views, nationality or official position influence the way that he or she hears or observes, rather than hear what the research participant is actually trying to say. My earlier experiences of Airbnb as a guest, my minor in tourism studies, and my interest and excitement towards Airbnb hosting were all reasons for why I chose this study subject. Discussing impartiality, it is meaningful to mention my positive view on the Airbnb home sharing phenomenon, even if I try my best to keep my personal opinions to myself. However, it is possible or even likely, that as I share the participants' passion towards hosting I am, for example, less prone to questioning the social motives hosts tell me than a more negatively positioned researcher might be. For example, financial gain is not the main reason why I would like to start Airbnb-hosting myself, and so to me it is reasonable to think that there might be others like me. My positive attitude is most likely also visible to the participants in the interview situations through my body language and verbal reactions, which in turn affect the data that is created in the situation.

It should also be noted that when I stayed at my hosts home's I paid for it like a regular Airbnb guest and what is even more important, the Airbnb application asked me to rate the experience. Like my hosts noted, the rating system is delicate, and even one mediocre review can make the host lose his or her *Superhost* status. In this sense, I had some sort of power over them during my stay. However, it is not probable that this affected the host's answers or behavior, as all the other "ordinary" guests will pay for the room and be asked to rate it, as well.

Comparing this Master's thesis to the original research plan, some changes happened. In the name of transparency, I will briefly mention the most prominent changes. I decided not to include some research methods I had planned and even executed, and changed the sample to all Finland-based hosts (more about his in chapter three). I did try to include non-Finnish Airbnb homes, because those exist in Finland, and they would have made my sample more comprehensive. However, none of the location-wise accessible listings were in my specified target group, instead practicing "remote hospitality" (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015: 1036).

2 Theoretical Background and Key Concepts

In this chapter, I will go through my theoretical background and key concepts. The first section is focused on psychological and cognitive anthropology and the concepts and terms I have decided to borrow from those schools, namely schema theory and cultural meanings. In the second half of this chapter, I concentrate on economic anthropology and more specifically on decision-making and sharing economy. Another field that is on the background of my study but is not closely involved with it due to the angle I have decided to take is anthropology of tourism, and I will briefly discuss it now. Airbnb can be included in the wide range of alternative tourism (opposed to mass tourism) as the accommodation that is based in local homes brings revenue straight to the "ordinary" families instead of businesses. (Fennell 2015: 7). The Airbnb home can be thought of as a part of a travel destination and my study can be regarded as studying the effects tourism has on the host community, which is a common theme in the anthropology of tourism (Nash 1996: 11). However, even when Airbnb hosting is deniably part of the tourism system, the theories of tourism would not help me with answering my research problem. The theories discussed next, on the other hand, will.

2.1 Cognitive Anthropology and Cultural Meanings in the Study of Home and Hosting

In this subsection, I will discuss cultural meanings, schemas, and cognitive anthropology and my use of them in this thesis. First I will briefly go over some of the history of cognitive anthropology in order to put the concepts I use in a context. Then I will move on to the theories I have decided to use. Finally I discuss why I have decided to use them.

Cognitive anthropology started forming in the late 1950's (D'Andrade 1995: 1). It is sometimes referred to as a subfield of psychological anthropology (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 9) although some think the connection between the two are more distant (D'Andrade 1995: 246). Some claim cognitive anthropology "lies within scientific anthropology" (Blount 2011: 23) which is related to the discussion of whether anthropology is a science or part of humanities (for example Hirst June 6 2019). Cognitive anthropology, which popularity peeked in 1960s, was inspired by linguistics and is well known from its investigative

techniques that were used to describe native cognition and create folk taxonomies (Erickson & Murphy 2017: 110-111). According to the cognitive anthropologist Roy D'Andrade, the basic problem of cognitive anthropology is "how cultural knowledge is organized in the mind" (D'Andrade 1995: 248). *Ethnoscience* is forerunner to the school of cognitive anthropology (D'Andrade 1995: 245), although the former has also been referred to as a more methodology oriented, narrower and restricted form of the latter (Ingold 2000: 160).

Many of my methods described in the next chapter can be placed in the field of cognitive anthropology. The lists and ratings I have asked my research participants to create aim to understand the order the participants give to things. Moreover, cognitive anthropology is interested in the emic – the native point of view, contrasted with etic, an "outsiders" view – and believe that the methods such as listing and participatory observation can help anthropologists reach their goal of being able to think and behave like native peoples (Erickson & Murphy 2017: 108). Even if I do not believe one can ever reach total understanding of a different culture or even an individual, I agree with cognitive anthropologists that analyzing the order of things or "folk taxonomies" can help in understanding people's shared practices and understandings. Especially if they are sometimes so mundane to the people themselves that they are hard to reach by, for example, verbal interviews. This is why I decided to use lists and rating in my study. I also believe that multiple methods create more diverse data.

In my analysis, I use the term *salience,* borrowed from anthropologist Pertti Pelto (2013). Pelto uses the term in the context of listing and explains that words that appear in relatively high place and in many lists are more "salient" to the people who created the lists compared to words that appear in relatively low place or in few lists (Pelto 2013: 172). My usage of the term is similar when I analyze the lists I have asked my research participants to make. Salience does not equal to "more important"; it simply shows what the most common items are that come to research participants' minds while listing things. Thus, salience does not tell me much about individuals' meanings but examining the salience of items on all the lists tells me about *cultural meanings* of the group – what items are most commonly thought when thinking of home.

There has been, and probably still is, debates on where culture is located, whether it is somewhere in people's heads or perhaps somewhere between people in social discourse (Ingold 2000: 160). In addition, many find the concept of "culture" to be problematic, when it is understood as something static and unchanging (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 4). Cognitive anthropologists situate in this debate more on the "in people's heads" side with their idea that "the cultural cognition can only take place by way of shared conceptual schemata lodged in the minds of individuals" (Ingold 2000: 160). However, they insist that culture is not only in the mind: cognitive anthropologists Claudia Strauss and Naomi Quinn argue following Roy D'Andrade that culture "consist of regular occurrences in the humanly created world, in the schemas people share as a result from these, and in the interactions between these schemas and this world" (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 7). Strauss and Quinn use *connectionism* and *schema theory* in explaining how external experiences and internal factors together create schemas that shape understandings, motivate action and create meanings (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 6, 50, 102).

Connectionism is movement in cognitive sciences that uses "artificial neural networks" in explaining intellectual abilities: different layered units (neurons) are connected to each other with weights that measure the strength of the connection (Buckner & Garson 2019: 1). Repeated use of a specific connection strengthens the connection and finally millions of neurons and their connections create schemas that in turn guide meanings and action (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 50-52). Strauss and Quinn's take on *schema theory* defines schemas "as networks of strongly connected cognitive elements that represent the generic concepts stored in memory" (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 6). Negative stereotypes can be used as an example of one sort of a schema, and how schemas work: they sometimes "shape our interpretation of the present, memories of the past and anticipations of the future" (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 49).

According to Strauss and Quinn, it is important to understand that there is a difference between schema and (cultural) *meaning*: "meanings are the product of a current events in the public world interacting with mental structures [schema], which are in turn the product of previous such interactions with the public world" (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 6). In other words, meanings are interpretations of particular situations and schemas are learned

cultural models. What makes meanings *cultural* is the "sharedness" of meanings between people with similar histories. (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 83; 49, 82.)

People have multiple schemas or cultural models that they apply in particular situations. However, there can be variation between which schemas individuals decide to use in any given situations between people from the same culture or even family. There can also be intracultural variation in the schemas that people develop depending on individual life experiences. (Strauss 2018: 352; 358; 369).

I use Strauss and Quinn's (1997) theory of cultural meaning in my thesis in two ways. The first is finding shared meanings of home. I look for similarities in my material and the meanings hosts can have of *home*. I also look for the differences there might be between the hosts and discuss those, although briefly. The second way is the *motivational force* schemas can have.

Motivational force of schemas is closely connected to emotions (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 102). There are different ways in which a schema can be motivating but emotions attached to experiences will make the motivational force stronger. Examples of how schema can be motivational are reward and punishment enforcing certain behavior, attaching behaviors to one's own goodness or badness, model behavior and social evaluation (1997: 102-104). For example wanting to be "a good mother" motivates acting according to the schema one has of being a good mother. Put into the context of my study, the wish to become an Airbnb *Superhost*, or the "punishment" of losing the *Superhost* tittle can motivate behaving according to the "good host" schema the host has developed from his or her earlier experiences and the Airbnb rules.

In the chapters four, five and six, I use the concepts of schemas, cultural meanings and salience in my analysis. I also use the Freudian psychological anthropologists' idea of childhood experiences affecting personality and cultures (Erickson & Murphy 2017: 75.) and connect it to the idea of schemas having motivational force.

2.2 Sharing, Exchange and Decision-Making

In this section, I discuss economic anthropology, decision-making and sharing economy. These themes are both important as a context to my study and as key concepts to my analysis, especially in the part examining why one makes the decision to share one's home with strangers. I will first briefly discuss economic anthropology, which both forms a background for my study subject and offers useful tools for my analysis. Then I will move to more specific concepts and theories I will use in my work.

It can be said that economic anthropology was partially created by the formalists-substantivist debate that started after the publishing of economic historian Karl Polanyi's book *Trade and Market in the Early Empires* in 1957. Before the debate, economic anthropology was largely just examining how the economy of cultures was organized. (Wilk & Cliggett 2007: 4.) In the debate economic formalists believed that there are universal economic behavior (the Western way) while economic substantivists claimed that the formalists were ethnocentric, and believed that different things motivate people's behavior when the primary significance of economic transactions is social (like in many non-Western cultures) (Erickson & Murphy 2016: 90). Anthropologists taking part in the debate include George Dalton and Marshall Sahlins on the substantivist side and Scott Cook and Raymond Firth on the formalist side of the debate (Wilk & Cliggett 2007: 9). The debate ended with no clear winner and other interests emerged, for example structural Marxism that linked together materialism and idealism (Erickson & Murphy 2016: 90.)

Themes such as choice and decision-making that I see as important to my thesis come from the formalist side of the debate (for example Firth (2004/1967)) but also the substantivist ideas of alternative logics for economic behavior play a big role in my study. Wilk and Cliggett (2007) include both of these ideas in their *social-temporal grid* (Figure 1) that one can use to map decision-making. In the context of human nature and rational decision-making, Wilk and Cliggett explain their grid thus:

> "To avoid posing social, moral, and selfish goals as alternatives, we can instead view them as portions of a wider territory on a scale or along a range. Our goal is to show that *all* can be seen as rational, but at different scales and in different contexts. Human nature can always be seen as rational; our goal is to empirically find out what makes it so. Furthermore,

instead of forcing diverse motives into discrete boxes, we can admit the possibility of mixed and ambiguous or multiple motives." (Wilk & Cliggett 2007:190).[2]

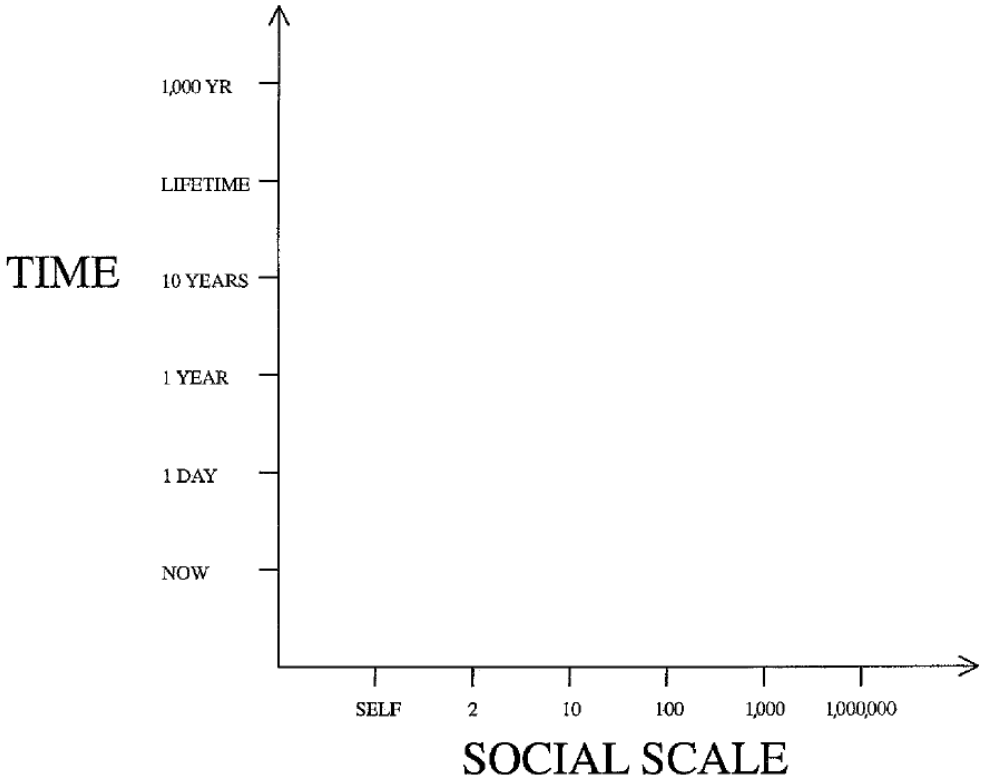

Figure 1 Wilk and Cliggett's social-temporal grid that "can be used to map different kinds of decisionmaking, showing that conventional notions of selfishness and altruism form a continuum" (Wilk & Cliggett 2007: 192).

The grid includes the common three types of human nature that dictate decision-making according to Wilk and Cliggett: *social*, *moral* and *self-interested* but does not force them into boxes. In their grid, on the vertical axis is time from this moment to infinity and on the horizontal axis is the amount of people taken into account in decision-making from one (self) to infinite (all people past and future). On this grid, selfishness and altruism in decision-making form a continuum and people's actions can be placed on it. The *self-*

[2] The idea of "rational decision-making" has been contested by many and the term "bounded rationality" has been commonly used to label decision-making bounded to particular situations, which I understand Wilk and Cliggett (2007) to also talk about in this context (Widlok 2017: 138).

interested decision-making can be found on the intersection of the two scales or axes, while *social* or *altruistic* decision-making fans out from there. The *moral* decision-making is placed on the infinite end of the time scale, where things such as afterlife or moral values of goodness or badness guide decision-making. (Wilk & Cliggett 2007: 191-192.)

Wilk and Cliggett (2007) have greatly affected my understanding of decision-making, and the grid as a tool has widened my view on what motivates people to behave as they do. I began, like a typical westerner, only considering the utility of things and assumed that decisions are based on self-interest rather than for example the social or moral alternatives. If psychological and cognitive anthropology gave me tools to understand individual's motivation and decision-making through schemas and cultural meanings, economic anthropology puts them on a bigger context. To me the grid offers a bigger form or a frame that I use in organizing my data, while the concepts from cognitive anthropology such as schema and cultural meaning fulfill the inside of the frame. Thus, both subfields of anthropology are used in my analysis but they have different functions.

Another important context for my study is *sharing economy* and the concepts that come with it, mostly from the fields of economics and tourism. Other words used for the sharing economy include "collaborative consumption" (Botsman & Rogers 2010) and "pseudo-sharing" (Belk 2014b), and in the case of accommodation "network hospitality" (Germann Molz 2014). In anthropology, the sharing economy can be placed as a new piece in wider discussion of sharing in anthropology. As for sharing, it can be placed within economic anthropology. (Widlok 2017: 136.) According to cultural anthropologist Thomas Widlok (2017: xvi) economic anthropology has long concentrated on the dualism between commercial market exchange and the gift economy. He argues that sharing is another way of allocating economic goods and distinct from these both (Widlok 2017: xvi).

However, like mentioned earlier in chapter one, it can be questioned if the domains of sharing economy such as Uber or Airbnb even are sharing, or short term rental and thus part of capitalist market exchange (Belk 2014b: 12, 16). Several economists (Belk 2014a; Habibi et al 2016) have situated Airbnb somewhere in the middle on the continuum from

sharing to exchange because it has qualities from both. While money is changing owner, nothing new is being consumed and it is the home that is shared.

According to Belk (2014b) three features should be paid attention to when districting pseudo-sharing from sharing: "the presence of profit motives, the absence of feelings of community, and expectations of reciprocity" (Belk 2014b: 7). He also insists that the intent of the participants is critical when distinguishing sharing from commerce: when the main intent is profit, the vocabulary of sharing cannot hide what is really commodity exchange, and when the main intent is enjoying social interactions, one becomes to oppose the features of commodity exchange such as payment (Belk 2014b: 19).

Belk's view on the "the main intent" is interesting in the context of the theorizing of decision-making presented above, both in the context of cognitive anthropology and economic anthropology. Following Strauss and Quinn (1997), the behavior of an individual is both guided by internal schema and the situation at hand. As the decision to take part in any activity is not static but might change in time, especially in situations such as Airbnb hosting where one decides to continue hosting (or not) after each guest, the "main intent" might change in time. From the view of Wilk and Cliggett (2007) there might be multiple motives for making certain decisions at the same time and defining which one is "the main intent" seems difficult. However, the aim of this thesis is not to define if Airbnb hosting is sharing or not and Belk's additions to the conversation and theorizing of sharing economy are valuable to me because unlike other scholars mentioned so far in this chapter, Belk explicitly discusses Airbnb and the motives of taking part in it, in his study.

Other studies that will appear later in my study that discuss Airbnb explicitly include Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) study executed in the Helsinki metropolitan area in Finland. Lampinen and Ikkala interviewed 12 hosts using semi-structured interviews. The focus of the study was the effects the monetary exchange that happened between the hosts and the guests had on the social interactions, which Belk (2014b) also discussed although more briefly. I borrow certain concepts from Lampinen and Ikkala such as *on-site hospitality* and *remote hospitality* when referring to hosts that stay in their homes during the stay of the guest and hosts that leave the home while the guests are present, respectively. Lampinen

and Ikkala's study is also executed in the same country as mine, Finland, thus making it an interesting point of comparison to my thesis. (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015: 1033, 1036.)

3 Research Material and Process

The main research methods I use in this Master's thesis are interview, participant observation, photography and free lists. In addition, I supplemented this qualitative work with a survey questionnaire. My research material consists of eight approximately one hour-long interviews, observations of four nights spent at research participants' homes, photographs they took, lists they made, and my own field notes. The research participants are all Finnish and based in three different cities in Finland. Even though I present the different methods as though they are separate, that is not the case: all the methods overlap. The fieldwork for this thesis started before I even stepped a foot into the host's home. In fact, the fieldwork began online, when I started going through Airbnb looking for possible interviewees. It continued through interactions with the hosts via messages, through walks through their neighborhoods all the way to their front doors and inside their homes, and until I left either the same day or the next. During this time, I interviewed the hosts and did participant observation in my role as a guest. The lists-makings and photo elicitation were part of the interview and we talked about them during my stay. Finally, I used the interview material to form a questionnaire where I asked my research participants to rate their motives for hosting. All the methods were used together to gather a comprehensive research material that could be used in the best possible way to answer the research question of this thesis.

3.1 The Hosts

I visited eight people's homes and conducted eight semi-structured interviews for this Master's thesis. I spent one night in four locations. One interview was done with a couple; all others were carried out with a single host. I found my research participants in three different ways: through mutual friends, via Airbnb website and via Facebook website. On Airbnb, I sent messages to potential hosts asking if they wanted to take part in my Master's thesis study. The way Airbnb works forced me to choose the dates before I could send the messages. If the days worked for the hosts and they agreed to take part, they sent me an invitation to stay at their homes. After that there was a discussion confirming both my arrival time and scheduling of the interview.

On Facebook, I posted a note to a group “Airbnb Suomi” asking for volunteers for this study. In order to post anything to the group one needs to be approved for membership by an administrator. I sent a private message to all the people who answered the original post about study participation and then meeting times were scheduled with the ones whose hosting activity met with the criteria of my study. All the hosts that contacted me through Facebook were women. Because of this, when looking for interviewees on Airbnb I deliberately chose more male hosts than female hosts. In the Table 1 below, you can see more information of the research participants. Some of the names have been changed due to wishes from the participants.

It was important to get research participants from varying backgrounds and age groups, but due to the methods participants were gathered, it was nearly impossible to know beforehand what type of person was behind the profile. Nevertheless, the sample of people ended up being quite comprehensive. The research participants vary from high school graduates to those who have obtained a higher university degree, from unemployed to freelancers and employees. The only significant limitation is that all the interviewees are between the ages of 30-55, but that is because no younger or older hosts could be found.

NAME	AGE	COHABITANTS	HOME TYPE	BEEN A HOST
EERO	30-34	Partner and a dog	Owner of a two floor row house	6 months
JANI	35-39	None	Tenant in an apartment building	6 years
JOHANNES	35-39	Children every other week	Tenant in an apartment building	2 months
MARIA	40-44	Partner, a dog, a cat	Owner of a detached house	2 years

PAULA	35-39	Husband, cats, husband's children every other weekend	Owner of a detached house	9 months
RITVA	40-44	2 children	Owner of a two floor row house	4 years
TEEMU	50-54	Children every other week	Owner of a detached house	5 years
TEIJA	40-44	2 cats	Owner of an unit in an apartment building	3 years
VILMA	30-34	Partner and a dog	Owner of a two floor row house	6 months

Table 1 The research participants and relevant information.

3.2 Listening and Experiencing

In my master's thesis, I used both case interviews and more informal key informant interviews. **Case or theme interviews** focus on information about the interviewee her/himself and follow a semi-structured outline, whereas key informant interviews resemble an informal conversation and focus on the topic at large (Pelto 2016: 158). In the case interviews, I used the same questions with all participants but the order varied or I asked different specifying questions depending on the situation. I decided to use case interviews, because with information gathered this way one can easily make comparisons and generalizations such as "half of the participants answered x" or "all participants said y" (Madden 2010: 68).

An advantage of interview, compared to for example an online questionnaire, is being able to observe the interviewee during the interview. Instead of just getting the answers, the interviewer can also take notes on *how* the answers are delivered. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009:

73.) In my study, this plays an important role because for example reluctance, belittling and pride could be detected from the ways the hosts talked about their homes, hosting and changes. The ways the hosts talked had a great importance on the analysis, because of different emotions that could be discerned from their replies. Such as the pride in their voice when talking about home, the love when talking about children, and the reluctance when discussing changes made to their homes because of Airbnb hosting. These expressions of emotion showed a deeper meaning towards the topic discussed than just the words used and connected individuals to larger cultural models, for example the ways of talking about home (Bernard & Gravlee 2015: 314).

Alasuutari writes referring to case studies: "people easily focus specifically on how they think about things and how they may differ from other members of a group or family" (2011: 151). This is precisely the kind of information that I was seeking. However, some of the interviewees sought to generalize on the Airbnb hosts' level, instead of telling their own view. This is probably due to their own academic background, their difficulty to understand that as individuals *they* are the experts on this subject, or based on a misconception that I seek to get a complete analysis or generalization of Airbnb hosting just from their personal interviews. Fortunately, these generalizations explain how they think *other people* think and are as good research material as the personal opinions and experiences that were sought after (Alasuutari 2011: 270).

I designed the questions to be as open-ended as possible to encourage open storytelling and to avoid leading the participants to certain answers (Madden 2010: 70). Some participants gave long detailed answers some were more short-spoken. If the questions only induced one-sentence answers, the other methods, free listing and photography, helped fill in the answers and provided a more complete picture of the meanings the research participants gave to the subjects discussed. One thing that could be changed is, if this study was repeated, the interview questions would be sent to the participants beforehand. This way they would have more time to think about their answers and even come up with their own questions if something was unclear to them.

In anthropological study and especially in ethnography the researcher has traditionally had one or more **key informants.** Key informants can systematically and in a detailed manner

explain cultural rules and models. Rather than focusing on the informant her/himself, key informants can discuss wider range of topics for example on the level of the whole community and its happenings. Key informant interviews do not follow any structured outlines but are more like open conversations between the key informant and the researcher. (Pelto 2013: 158.)

By accident, one of the interviewees became the key informant for my study. She was interested in the study subject and had herself graduated from tourism studies. She invited me to come discuss the topic over a cup of coffee whenever I wanted, and so I did. During these meetings we discussed various topic from her renovation plans for the Airbnb room to research methods, and she tested out different styles of sorting and value rating (Figure 2) before they were finalized for this study. I find that talking my research topic with her widened my view on it. She had both the hands-on experience from Airbnb hosting, and the academic background to see the Airbnb phenomenon at large, and so she could challenge my notions and inspired new questions.

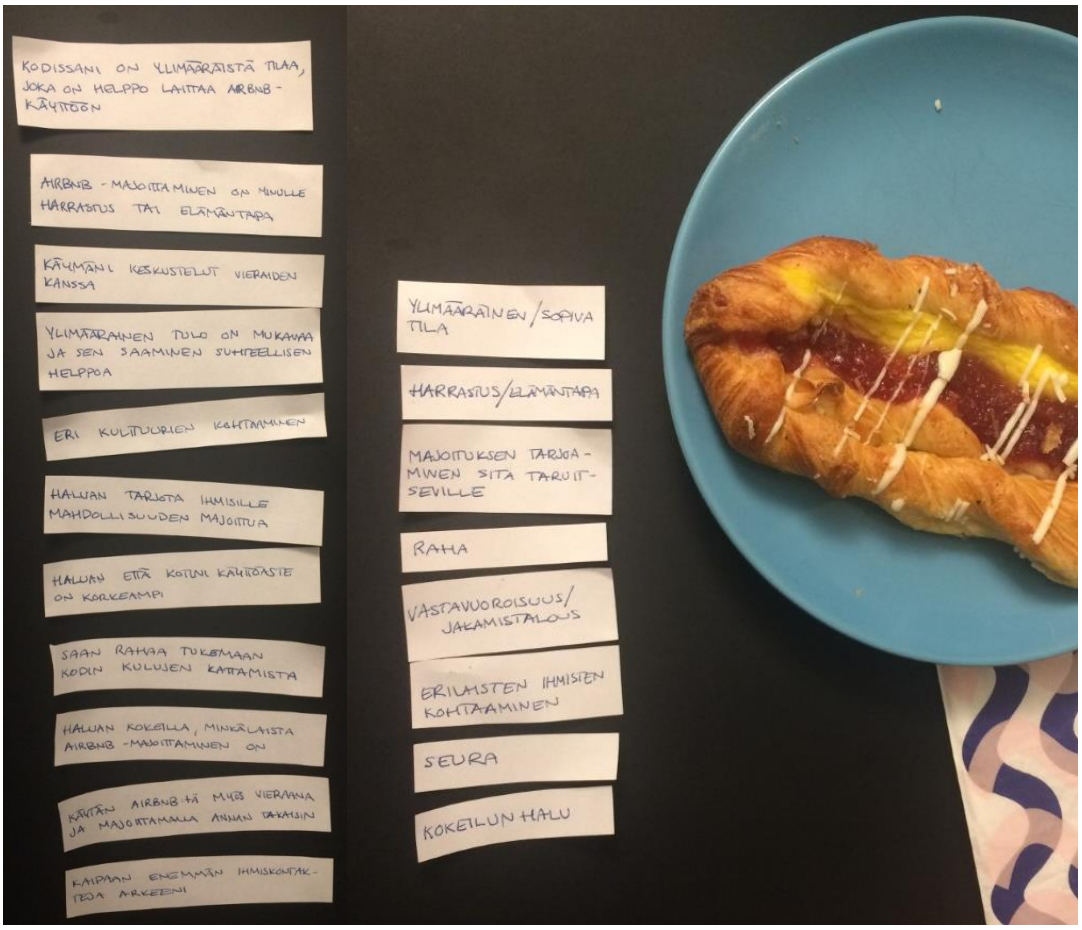

Figure 2 Trying different styles of sorting and value rating with my key informant Ritva. A great key informant also offers free pastries and several cups of coffee.

Participant observation is considered the foundation of ethnographic research. The classical way is to live with the group of people one is studying for a long period of time, to immerse oneself in the culture and habits of the participants and understand them better in order to give a reliable account. However, in contemporary anthropology short-term fieldwork periods are common, especially if there are multiple fieldwork sites or the subject is close to one's natal society, as is the case in my master's thesis. (Madden 2010: 79-80, 93.) Whether the time spent with participants is short or long, the principles are the same: "the ethnographer wants to get as close to the participants as they can in the time given, and yet maintain their critical ethnographic position" (Madden 2010: 80.)

For half of the interviews I conducted, I visited the research participants' homes only for the duration of the interview. For the other half I spent one night at their homes as an Airbnb guest. In doing so, I wanted to see how the hosts interact with their guest and if

what they told me in the interviews actually happened in reality. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009) write about the spoken and the acted coming together: “It has been shown that the interview expresses more strongly the norms associated with a particular phenomenon or issue than the behavior itself. Observation may expose this contradiction” (2009: 81). This became meaningful in this study. For example, when asked about the changes or alterations the hosts had made, most hosts told me that they had not done any changes, yet you could see there were shampoo bottles titled “guests” in the bathroom and Oulu City brochures on the living room table.

Pink (2016: 33) makes an important point how it is impossible for researcher to completely separate work and everyday identities. This becomes evident in this study because I have used Airbnb as a guest for years outside of my master’s thesis and my earlier experiences can’t *not* affect my work. The visits I have done for this study are only one-night stays, mainly for recourse reasons, but I have stayed at Airbnb hosts’ homes longer periods before, in Spain and the USA. These earlier experiences influence the conclusions I draw, and the way I understand things and read between the lines whether I want it or not.

It is also important to acknowledge that my position as an “unusual” guest might affect how much the hosts interact with me. To the hosts, I am both a guest and a researcher and they can choose their behavior according to that; they will not forget my researcher status when the formal interview part is over (Madden 2010: 6). Originally, I planned to include my two-week long stay in Spain in my research material. I asked my Airbnb host if she wanted to take part in my study and even interviewed her. However, I decided that including a Spanish host in my study, where all other participants were Finnish, would not make this study better; it would just make it confusing by forcing me to take into account the cultural differences between the Finnish and Spanish hosts and complicate the analysis.

3.3 Listing and Rating

Pertti Pelto (2013) writes about **lists and sorting** in the context of applied ethnography. According to him, free listing is “the easiest, quickest, and most productive interview technique for getting a good ‘start list’ of the contents of a specific cultural domain, or topic, that you are interested in” (2013: 169). In this method, the researcher chooses a

subject and asks the research participant(s) to list things in that category. The researcher can decide the number of things listed or can leave it open. In my study, I asked the participants to write down ten words that came to mind from the word "home". Pelto uses the term *salient* for items that appear high on the list, and can be found in most lists. Words that are mentioned only in few lists or close to the bottom of the lists are not *salient.* (Pelto 2013: 169.)

Listing was a useful companion to the traditional interview. It added to the material nicely and worked better as a method with some of the informants. For example, Teemu found it hard to verbally answer this question:

> Roosa: *What about… what is home like?*
>
> Teemu: *What is it like… Well right now it looks like this [laughter]. You have difficult questions. I don't know how to answer that. What is it like... It's like this this time.*

Most of the participants described the home with adjectives. Here the interviewee had difficulties answering the question "What is home like?" (*Millainen on koti?)* Surprisingly, when asked to list words that come to his mind when thinking of home, almost every word was an adjective: safe, atmospheric, warm, functional, full of light, open, cozy, my own. [3] He listed the words with ease (even though he found my research method amusing) and the content of the list resembled the others. Clearly writing down helped him to answer the question. Without the list, this specific question in this interview would have been left practically unanswered.

Many factors affect the formation of a list, even if we leave out the obvious things that have close to no importance in my study, like language barrier and cultural differences (Pink 2007). One affecting factor is how familiar the interviewees are with the subject. I decided to first warm up a little and asked questions "what is home?" *(Mikä on koti)* and

[3] In Finnish: Turvallinen, tunnelmallinen, lämmin, toimiva, valoisa, avoin, viihtyisä, oma.

"what is home like?" *(Millainen on koti?)* before requesting to make lists about home. In this case, the conversations we had before the listing affected the lists; what kind of things, memories and details they discussed, what ideas my questions stimulated for them. It was also essential to go through the lists together so that I understood the context and possible multiple meanings of the items. One of the informants wrote down "open" and when asked about it, he said he meant both the open concept of his home, and being open to Airbnb guests. This was most likely influenced by our earlier conversation about Airbnb hosting.

Even if the previous conversations might affect the lists, and one might argue that beginning the interview with the listing might generate more objective data, I find the order in which I carried this out was more meaningful for my study. When a participant has warmed up to thinking about topic and reflected upon what home means to him/her, the words in the lists become more personal. The lists written by the participants were nicely varied and had both common adjectives (peaceful, comfortable) and specific everyday items (key, couch).

Sorting is a common companion to lists, and **rating** is a specialized form of sorting (Pelto 2013: 179)**.** A common way is to instruct people to arrange the items on a scale from high to low, good to bad or by some other criteria. In my study, I gathered the motives for Airbnb hosting from the interviews and then formed them into an online questionnaire**.** The questionnaire was then sent to the participants via e-mail. It had three parts. The hosts were asked to rate the motives from high to low in importance regarding their reasons to (1) start hosting and (2) to keep hosting. Finally (3) they were asked to rate the importance of the motives put in sentences on a scale from zero (not important) to four (very important) (Appendix 2).

There were three reasons for using a questionnaire. Firstly, I wanted data that is more specific regarding the relative placement of the importance of the motives. Secondly to discover whether the answers given in the interview and in the questionnaire would match, and thirdly to explore and learn how to use different kinds of methods. The first two are common reasons to engage in mixed methods; to use qualitative and quantitative methods together to "(a) provide analytic texture to [the] work; (b) compensate for the deficiencies of one genre with the strengths of another; or (c) modify or strengthen the analytic findings

when the results of each genre support, corroborate, or contradict each other." (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2019:36). The questionnaire also aided in the organization of the data, which is presented later, in chapter five.

3.4 Home through a Lens

Photography is in no way new method in anthropology. "Supported by different methodological paradigms, a camera has been an almost mandatory element of the 'tool kit' for research for several generations of ethnographers", Sarah Pink writes (2007: 65). Photography was first used as an objective recording device to document cultural and physical differences. Then from 1960 to early 1980 many social scientists argued against using visual ethnography due to it being too subjective, unrepresentative and unsystematic. With the advent of "new ethnography" in the late 1980s and the idea of ethnography as a fiction, the visual was no longer more subjective or objective than text. Visual became more widely accepted in ethnography. (Pink 2007: 9-10.)

Photogaphs are used in many ways in research besides "objective" recording. Interviewing with images, photo elicitation, photo-voice, discussing visual representations without the images actually being present, taking pictures… these are a few possible methodological implementations of the images. It is important to remember that the picture as itself does not *prove* anything without its context. An image always needs a caption to be meaningful to the research (Pink 2007: 125; Madden 2010: 132). However, even if the picture itself does not tell the "whole truth" people still take it as a "proof" of what is. The researcher needs to consider how an image could be understood out of its context in order to make sure that it does not harm the community or any of the individuals being studied. (Pink 2007.) In this study, the hosts were asked to take three to five photos of things or spots in their homes that are especially meaningful to them. To give them a context, we then discussed the pictures and why they decided to take these particular ones.

When studying something as personal as a home, one needs to be even more careful in choosing research methods (Pink 2007). Photographing a home is not the same as taking pictures in a public place. I felt this concretely when I did my fieldwork; even after asking permission, taking pictures of the hosts' homes felt intrusive. Making the hosts take the

pictures rather than doing it myself was my solution to this problem. I did take some pictures myself after asking for permission – mainly of the things that separated the hosts' home from non-Airbnb homes such as guiding notes left to the guests, or entries in guest books – but most of the pictures in this work are taken by the hosts themselves.

The pictures encouraged a lot of information: people who were more tight-lipped than the others shared more when we had the picture in front of us. With Maria especially, the pictures were a useful method and brought out new information: whereas in the interview she talked of concrete objects and "cold facts", discussing the pictures, she brought forward family ties and important remembrance.

Another way pictures were used included showing the hosts pictures of different styles of Airbnb homes and asking them to choose one and talk about the coziness of the homes. However, I decided that I had enough material for my master's thesis without including this part in my analysis.

3.5 Forming Themes and Taking Steps

A common way to carry out qualitative analysis is to choose a particular point of interest within one's research material, go through this material to separate the relevant data, code and categorize the chosen material, write a summary, and then analyze the various points of connection and difference (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009). My analysis roughly followed this framework. After the interviews were written down, three identical documents of every interview were created: one document for each research question. In these documents, the words and sentences that were repeated in the interviews were highlighted with different colors. Each color represented a new theme. The most frequently repeating themes were then chosen to be discussed further in this thesis (such as the importance of household animals to the coziness of home or the denial of change in the home). In this material I was interested in discovering similarities but also strikingly opposing opinions. Finally, I searched for more information and studies revolving around the themes and strived to understand them further. What the theme *meant* in this context, why it was important and how it related to other studies.

The approach I chose was from bottom up: first grouping together repeating answers and forming (sub)categories or first level abstractions, then grouping these categories together to form second level abstractions or "upper" categories, until I was answering my research questions[4]. The analysis was a process of going back and forth between the material and the theory: the knowledge I had before affected my research methods and therefore my material, and the material made me search for more studies that addressed the same themes. This type of analysis that is situated between data-driven analysis and theory-based analysis is further explained in Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009: 96-97). One could also describe this as an abductive reasoning where an anomaly is observed (hosting activity that does not seem to make sense), a hypothesis is formed (There must be other motives than money. What are they? Does home mean something different to them?), inductive testing is performed (collection of data, comparing to further data), and finally getting a deductive confirmation that the hypothesis does predict the anomaly (Shelley 1995).

I, like many others I believe, had a problem with the relatively large amount of data I had. To help visualize the data, I created excel tables for the repeating answers. From these tables I formed the first level abstractions. Then, when the data was still too large to handle just in my head or on the computer screen, I formed the second level abstractions with the help of scissors and blu tack (Picture 2). Being able to move the themes around with my hands to form different groups was a big help when forming the final level of abstraction.

[4] Strauss (1987) discusses levels of abstraction and Tuomi and Sarajärvi use sub and "upper" categories (in Finnish *alakategoria* and *yläkategoria)*.

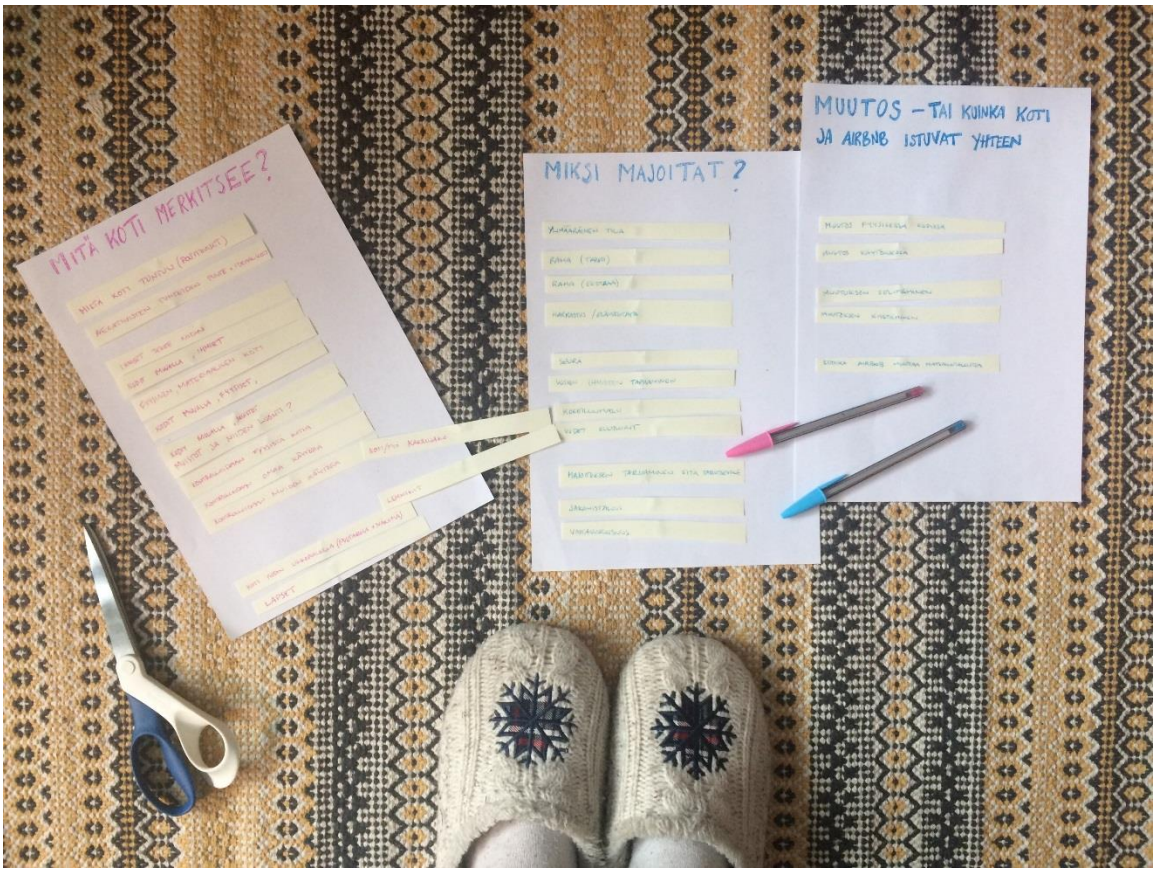

Figure 3 For the second level abstractions I used arts and crafts to visualize the data

The analysis was done during and after fieldwork. Going through and transcribing the interviews I had already done, helped me improve my skills before the next interviews. It gave me ideas about what more to ask, where to poke. If an interviewee raised an interesting point, I paid attention if the next ones mentioned it too or asked what he or she thought about that viewpoint. Question about why the hosts would stop hosting were added on the fly during the first interview and then it was also added to the interview framework. This way of working helps fill gaps in data and test new hypotheses that emerge during analysis (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña 2019:62).

With the questionnaire, I used the charts the program had created based on the answers, to discover the most common motives for hosting. I then grouped these motives into three categories based on the importance the participants gave them. All the motives in each of the categories also had some common feature or theme. In chapter five, I the categories are

differentiated from each other based on both importance to participants and the *altruism*[5] of the motives.

The lists and the pictures functioned to help me gauge the meanings of home (chapter four), and the questionnaire was used to find the motives for hosting (chapter five). Together the interviews, pictures, lists, questionnaire and participatory observation formed a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon studied. Diverse data such as mine is common in social sciences and is useful for qualitative analysis (Strauss 1987:3).

For me, the analysis really was a process; the information, the theoretical framework I had before the fieldwork period, guided the questions and assumptions I had going in. Then after I had gathered my material and started to see themes, I needed to find out more information about those themes. It was like taking steps, right left right left, where one follows the other and at the same time paves the way to the next one, theory then fieldwork then theory again. This process is reminiscent of one kind of hermeneutical circle, where understanding is approached by varying between interpretations and redefining them in light of new information (Agar 1980: 258).

[5] Wilk and Cliggett (2007) use the word altruism when discussing the amount of people taken into account in decision-making.

4 Cultural Meanings of Home

In this chapter, I discuss the meanings given to home by research participants. Based on the interviews, the lists and the photographs the hosts took, I formed five categories of ways of talking about home: (1) feelings and atmosphere of home (2) the material home, (3) family, (4) activity, and (5) control. Below, each of these categories is analyzed in its own subchapter. It should be kept in mind however that the creation of five categories is artificial and that they are connected and not mutually exclusive: physical items create feelings of coziness and are reminders of loved family members, while people and pets and their activities are important to the atmosphere of the home. Other categorizations concerning the meanings of home similar to this one can be found from anthropology and close fields of study. For example Johansson & Saarikangas (2009) note that home consists of physical space and objects, atmosphere and the habitants. Gerontologist Sheila Molony (2010) in her "qualitative metasynthesis" of the meanings of home, noted that the concept of control was a focal to meanings of home, although she used the terms *empowering* and *mastery.* Thus, my findings are in line with other studies of home, even if I found none that covered all the meanings of home discussed here in my thesis.

4.1 "Inside those walls you can relax"

> Roosa: *Then we move on to the next topic, that is, home. Now I will ask these wide questions such as what in your opinion is home.*
>
> Jani: *Eaaasy questions…. [sarcastically]. Well. What might the home be [thinks]. It is its own kind of safety cave. How can I say… Inside those walls you can relax, you don't need to let anyone in if you don't want to. And you can be there alone and in peace. I think that is home. For me it is a place for calming down and being alone, primarily. And also… a safe spot.*

As can be seen from Jani's hesitancy in the quote above, home is not easy to define. Many hosts struggled in the beginning when answering the question "what is home". They could not find just one word or definition. However, when the hosts got started, they mentioned many different meanings and they seemed to enjoy talking about their homes. Even with a relatively small sample size of just nine hosts, the approaches to home which people

discussed differed greatly. Some approached the idea of home primarily through material (4.2), some through ownership and control (4.5). Some concentrated on the atmosphere of the home. In this section, the last approach is discussed in three parts: (1) what the home feels like and what one feels like at home, (2) the lack of negative feelings and the ideal home, and (3) the separation of home from the outside and the dyad of work and home. This approach or category is the one that the hosts most often started with when they began describing home.

When asked what home is, and what home is like, the hosts often answered using adjectives. They described what the home feels like and what one feels like at home. Research participants gave responses about home that suggested it is peaceful, comfortable, cozy, and warm. When one is at home, one feels at peace, relaxed, safe, comfortable, and stress free. At home, one can charge one's batteries and refresh.

> Roosa: *What is home like?*
>
> Teija: *What is it like… Home is peaceful. [pauses] In a way… yes peaceful. Safe. [pauses] Home is where… you get energy in a way. [thinks] Even if it is peaceful, you get energy from there [laughs].*

The two most salient words used to describe the home based on the lists which the hosts wrote are "peace" (*rauha*) and "safety" (*turva*). These words came up and were repeated in spoken interviews as well: "In my opinion home is a comfortable, safe place", said Johannes, while Paula explained that at home "you feel serene". Participants' most common way of describing or defining home was to begin with "it is a place" and continue with "where you can feel [insert adjective]". Here is an example that shows the couple Vilma and Eero doing just that when they discussed what home is:

> Vilma: *[Home] is that sort of a place where one can relax and feel safe*.
>
> Eero: *Hmm yeah. It is that place where you can take a deep breath if you have had a hard, shitty day or something.*

After *peace* and *safety* the other most salient words were *family*, *coziness* and *relaxed.* The image of home which these words suggest is idyllic without any negative sense.

This lack of negativity was apparent in the interviews. The research participants were asked if home was always a positive thing. Six out of nine answered "yes, always" and "yes absolutely" straightaway. One answered "usually", and two said "no", including Jani:

> Roosa: *Is home always a positive thing?*
>
> Jani: *[thinks] No. Not even that is always a positive thing. Sometimes you want to get away from home. But then when you return to home, it is a positive thing, when you have been away, somewhere else, for a moment.*

Jani explained that sometimes when one is at home for too long, one feels the need to get away. Johannes was the other participant who said "no", continuing that housework was not always nice. He went on to conclude that doing the housework eventually contributes to the feelings of coziness so at the end of the day, housework produces positive things. Paula said that home is the place where couples argue. She also added that fortunately she and her husband rarely did so. None of the negative associations with home were particularly alarming and none of the other participants mentioned having negative feelings in or about the home. This is why I draw a conclusion that the feelings described in the beginning of this chapter are what the research participants think one *should* feel like at home – the ideal. I do not claim that the participants do not experience these feelings of relaxation, safety, etc. at home; on the contrary, they surely do, but the significant lack of any negativity is revealing. It is likely that all the research participants, just like probably most people, have negative feelings in and about their homes from time to time. I argue that the fact that they did not bring any negative sides up proves that the hosts are talking about ideal homes. Nevertheless, it is interesting how positive the *idea of home* is among the hosts. The question I asked about home always being a positive thing, was inspired by an anthropologist Minna Ruckenstein (2009), who has written about domestic violence:

> "Regardless of the idealized notions that present the home in the spirit of 'poetics of space' as 'the haven in a heartless world', domestic spaces frequently transform into settings of persistent violence and abuse. Finnish women, for instance, are much more likely to be killed in their homes than in the streets" (2009: 240-241).

Given the regrettable frequency of domestic abuse, it is interesting that none of the hosts mentioned it. This also supports the argument that the host were describing the ideal home,

or the ideal home to them, as most likely they were thinking of what home means to them specifically.

Other studies have resulted in similar findings about the meanings of home. In his study concerning the experience of atmosphere in the home, sociologist Paul J. J. Pennartz' (1999) interviewees describe similar positive feelings that can be found in this study: "[…] Nice and quiet on that couch, cup of coffee, watching TV… then I can really relax […]" (Pennartz 1999: 100). In Pennartz' study, 25 Dutch households that lived in public housing projects were interviewed. The similarity of his results to mine might be caused by the concept of pleasantness he used. Pennartz asked *when it is most pleasant at home.* Because the participants of my study rarely mentioned any negative aspects of home, the interviewees in both studies answered practically to the same question: what is an ideal home. In Pennartz study, it is important that the relaxation and pleasant feelings came after work. I also detected the dyad of home and work from my material.

The research participants repeatedly described home as a safe haven *(turvasatama)* or a stronghold *(tukikohta).* While these words depict home as a safe place, they also draw a picture of the home as being separate from the outside. "You don't have to bring the worries from the outside into your home" (Jani). This outside world, which one does not need to bring home, includes work. Apart from one, none of the research participants mentions work when talking about home, instead repeatedly describing a home that is free of stress and in which you do not need to do anything.

Separation of home and work can also been seen in Jokinen's (2009) study where she introduced four shifts of the domestic life using notions of inside and outside the home. Jokinen first introduces Donna Haraway's, an American feminist scholar, three forms of families and then added a fourth herself. In short, the first shift that "covers the era from the nineteenth century and the birth of the bourgeois nuclear family to the turn of the twentieth century" (Jokinen 2009: 360) had women in home and men working outside of home. In the second shift, women were encouraged to "step outside of the home" and join the work force. The third saw work and home shifting places, when work life came to be experienced as more pleasant than crowded and demanding home life. In the fourth shift, the thus-far quite sturdy border between home and work started blurring, mixing work and

home together while people used a lot of energy in keeping them separate. (Jokinen 2009: 360-363.)

According to Jokinen, even if we are now living the fourth shift, to her interviewees, the ideal home was the first or second shift idea of a home; (1) a patriarchal home with a stay-at-home mom or (2) home with both parents working outside of home and then after work enjoying stress free pleasant time at home. (Jokinen 2009: 360-363.)

My study supports Jokinen's theorization of the fourth stage of home as well as the notion of what is thought of as the ideal home. Among my participants, the only person who mentioned work in the context of home is Paula. She said that because she works from home, work sometimes creates stress in the home. Even if no other participants mentioned having to work from home and their verbal answers painted a picture of ideal stress-free home without any trouble from outside world, the participatory observation told a different story. Half of the homes that were visited overnight, the hosts told me they had some work stuff to do after we were done with the interview. One of the hosts that emphasized that you did not need to bring worries from outside into your home, sat at a table working, when I arrived to his home around six o'clock in the evening. Still, these participants did not mention work at all when defining home. It might be that if the work is pleasant, it is not seen as an "outside worry" but I find it more likely that in the hosts' idea of home, the work was kept strictly separate from home like in Jokinen's (2009) study and if sometimes in reality it was not, it was ignored in the interviews.

Alternatively, perhaps today work and home mixing is so normal part of everyday life that people do not even pay attention to it anymore. This topic is certainly interesting in the light of the resent happenings in the world, namely the corona virus pandemic. The "new normal" in Finland includes increasing time spent at home and the recommendation from the government to work from home when possible (Government Communications Department et al 16.3.2020). During this time, the mixing of home and work is normal but also possibly increasingly annoying.

4.2 "Place where I live, where my own personal things are"

> Roosa: *What is a home?*
>
> Maria*: Well it is that kind place where I live, where my own personal things are […].*

Maria's description of a home is a great example of how materiality permeates the meanings of home in this study. The context of Airbnb (sharing of home in very physical way), or the research methods I have chosen such as taking pictures (pictures without context show only the material) can have an effect on this. Another reason can be the contemporary western culture in general, where we are constantly encouraged to buy things to make the home feel cozier. This subchapter concentrates on the material aspects of home; how the material things create home and give it meaning. Two main ways are detected: material objects (1) creating coziness and (2) as vessels for memories. It is also noted that the home does not limit to the house or apartment but also the yard and even the view from the window can have great meaning to the inhabitants of the home.

There were differences between the research participants in how they talked about home. Some of the hosts saw home through material things, some described it more through feelings and atmosphere like in the last section. Maria brought the aspect of objects and ownership of them forward most prominently. It was obvious both from the list she made (Figure 4) and from her verbal answers that she primarily saw the home as a vessel that held inside all of her material belongings: "Well [home] is a place where I live, where my own personal things are […]" (Maria). Maria's answer to the question of *what is home* is extremely down to earth and factual, and her list includes physical items such as a key and clothes.

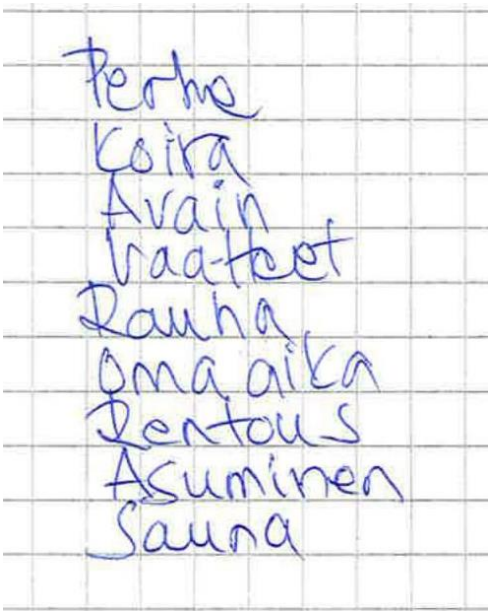

Figure 4 list made by Maria. Family, dog, key, clothes, peace, own time, relaxation, habitation, sauna.

Maria is not an exception to this sample; other participants also placed a lot of importance on the materiality of their home. Vilma and Eero described their new home as “an empty canvas” that one could start filling with meaningful things. According to them, one could not buy a home from a store; it comes together slowly piece by piece. They talked about their furniture; some bought new or from flea markets, some they had made themselves and some have followed them from home to home (Figures 5 and 6). Sense of pride could be heard in them discussing how they had put their home together. To them it was important that they could make their home just as they liked it and that they get to take care of it. Eero, lovingly dubbed as a DIY-man by his partner Vilma, said about their home that: ”I want to tinker with this until I am sixty, I am in no hurry to leave”. He continued that he wanted to keep fixing the place so that it would continue to be comfortable and cozy for them.

Figure 5 by Vilma. DIY shelves made from old skateboards.

Figure 6 by Vilma. These suitcases have followed Vilma from home to home.

Other hosts mentioned physical things such as furniture (couch) and other objects (carpet) that were important to the home. In the case of the latter, the carpet was extremely important factor in making the home cozy[6]. Jani had two similar carpets, one in the kitchen and the other in his personal living space in the living room. "The carpet makes the room", he said when explaining the picture he took of the kitchen carpet.

[6] see the movie *The Big Lebowski* on importance of carpets.

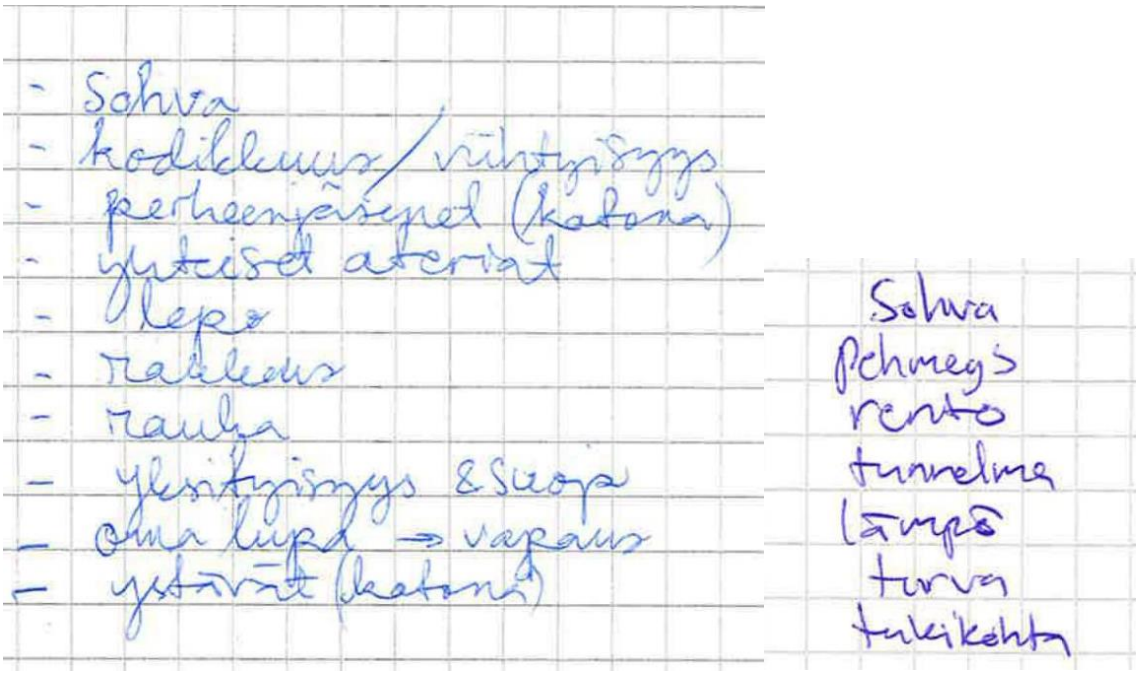

Figure 7 list made by Ritva. Couch, homeliness/cosiness, family members (at home), shared meals, rest, love, peace, privacy & protection, own permission -> freedom, friends (at home).

Figure 8 list made by Jani. Couch, softness, relaxed, atmosphere, warmth, safety, stronghold.

"Couch" was mentioned in the interviews, it was photographed ,and it was even the first thing written on two of the lists (Figures 7 and 8). The appearance of "couch" on these lists is interesting. Both of the interviews were carried out at a dinner/kitchen table, not in the living room (which was where the couch was located), so the location should not have affected the lists. When asked to take three to five pictures of spots or things at home that were especially important to their home, Johannes took a picture of his couch (Figure 9). The explanation he gave when discussing the picture, might also explain other hosts' reasons as to why the couch is important to the home:

> Roosa: *The first picture. What is this? What are we looking at?*
>
> Johannes: *That is my corner on the couch. And then that wicker chair where I really like to sit. They are places for me to relax and be with my thoughts and the couch is where I often lounge with the kids, especially with my teenage daughter. It is the place of this home… the place where you can stop and just be.*

Figure 9 by Johannes. The couch and the wicker chair are important parts of Johannes' home.

To Johannes and other research participants, the couch was a place where one can relax. It was a spot in the house that one occupied a lot, and thus important part of the home.

The couch, like other important furniture and objects in the house, had memories attached to it. Memories of good moments like in Johannes' case, or memories of people the things remind the owner of. The pictures the hosts took convey this in the best way. The things portrayed in the pictures – movie posters from the 1950s, art works, furniture – all had great stories attached to them. Maria told the following when asked why she took the picture (Figure 10):

> Maria: *That is an ancient cupboard from the 1800s. Over there [points]. I like this awfully lot. I think it looks lovely and next to it, you can see another really old one. I like old items and furniture. And that is my mom's, kind of like a heritage cabinet, so that's why I especially like it.*

Figure 10 by Maria. Her mother's cupboard.

Figure 11 by Maria. An artwork gifted by her mother.

Even if Maria's answers to questions such as *what is home* were practical and material-oriented, the pictures brought forward another side. From the way she talked about the objects in the pictures which she took, it became clear that the meaning of home to her was not just the objects but also the history, legacy and memories attached to them. In another photograph she took was an artwork that pictured a girl leaning on a railing (Figure 11). According to Maria, her daughter was in her 20s when her own mother gave her the artwork. In her speech she brought together three generations of women, all reminded by the artwork. Johansson and Saarikangas write about the home being "a meeting place of inhabitants, building, culture, past and present" (2009:10). The memories attached to material things truly bring the past and present together in this case.

The physical home is not limited to the actual house or apartment. The hosts included the yard and in some cases, the view from the window, into their concept of home. Vilma and Eero who had lived in their own apartment for almost a year at the time of the interview, said that their own yard made them realize that this is it: their very own home. They had previously lived in various apartments in the city of Helsinki which had only had balconies.

Paula took four pictures of the home she shares with her partner, and her garden and greenhouse feature in all of them (Figures 12 and 14). The back wall of their house is class and she said that one of the most important reasons why she and her husband decided to buy that house was the illusion of the garden continuing into the house:

> Paula: *Well, this is almost the same [as the last picture], of course, almost everything is taken from the same place now, but it's like the unification of this yard and the interior of this house is like, one, one factor why we even bought this house at all. And one more thing of course is that greenhouse. So it has been that long-term dream. And the opportunity to like grow food yourself has kind of always interested me, even though I've always lived in the city. And now I'm living in a detached house for the first time so… and last summer was kind of the first time I had the opportunity to use that greenhouse so I really got excited about it. And it also has a lounge area so you can hang out there.*

Figure 12 by Paula. The unification of the inside and the outside of the house.

Teija took a picture of her windowsill and the view out the window (Figure 13). She said that the room is so dear to her because of the windows facing two different sides of the building. She also mentioned that her view from the window had changed, because her

neighbor cut down their trees. It is interesting to note that the home can spread outside of the traditional four walls even in cases where no actual yard is in the possession of the inhabitant, for example, when one lives in an apartment. In Teija's case, it is quite clear that the view from the window is important to her everyday meanings of home:

> Teija: *Kitchen window. I took that [picture] because I think this kitchen is the best in the world because it has windows in two directions. And then, in front of that window, I often like to watch and wonder when the neighbors, the neighbors are in the yard and I always like to watch the neighbor's hustle and bustle from that window and… especially when you cook food, here it is good to cut, chop things and look out the window. That's the kind of thing I like a lot.*

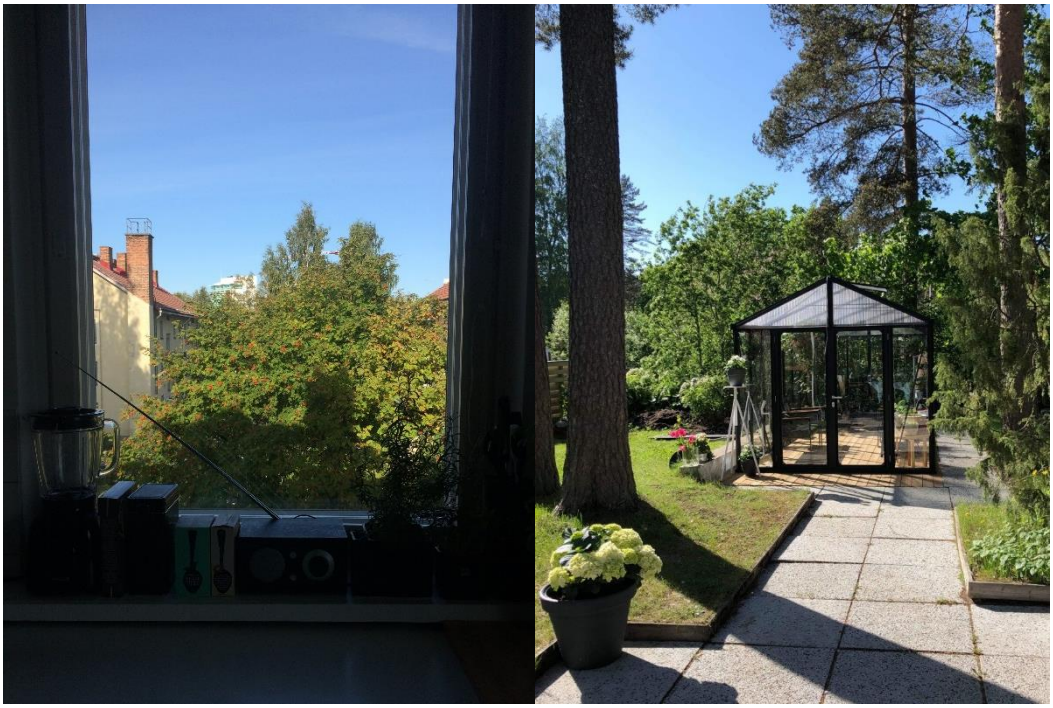

Figure 13 The windows on two walls in the kitchen are part of the reason why it is Teija's favourite room.

Figure 14 Paula's greenhouse and back garden that are important parts of her home.

One interesting observation about the images taken is that none of the male participants took pictures of the outside of the house or apartment. Even in Eero and Vilma's interview, Vilma was the one who brought up the yard. This might have something to do with the gender stereotypes there are in Finland and elsewhere that it is the women who take care of the garden, are interested in planting flowers, or growing vegetables they can later use

in cooking (which is another traditionally female chore in Finland). However, some of the interviews were executed in the early summer, others in November. Mostly, they were during evening time when in November it is dark outside in Finland. The darkness might have affected the fact that none of the latter interviewees paid any mind to their yards, including all the male participants (excluding Eero).

I conclude from my material that the material things are important to the meanings of home. This makes sense, of course, since the home is often located to a certain house or apartment and include furniture and other necessary objects. But there are two other reasons as to the centrality of the material in conceptions and meanings of home. First, the material is important in creating a cozy atmosphere in the house or an apartment thus helping in the process of making it into a home and creating feelings of at-homeness. Second, the material objects in the house are permeated with memories that are important to the inhabitants, making the past and present meet. "Multidimensional spatial and temporal intersection", write Johansson and Saarikangas (2009: 10). Together these objects and their meanings form a home - as Vilma and Eero said, the home comes together piece by piece.

The home has been said to have three dimensions: local or spatial (*paikallinen*), temporal (*ajallinen*) and social (*sosiaalinen*) (Vilkko 2010). From these three the first and the second have been discussed in this section, in the form of material home and memories. In the next two sections, I will discuss the relevance of the social dimension.

4.3 "It is not a home if there are no people there"

Roosa: *Is this place your only home?*

Ritva: *Well... at the moment it is.*

Roosa: *Yeah.*

Ritva: *Yeah. If you don't count people.*

Roosa: *Well if you want to count them then…?*

Ritva: *I do have a two-legged home then, but he lives a little further away.*

Like can be deciphered from the citation above, this section addresses the social dimension of home, namely, people and household animals. Three themes are discussed: (1) people giving meaning to the home, (2) the importance of pets, and (3) the influence of childhood experiences to the creation of meanings of home.

Six of the nine hosts said that they have another home(s) in addition to the one where the interview took place. Five of the six had a loved(s) one(s) in that other home. Eero said that he regards his parents' house his home even though he has never lived there. Ritva in the citation above said that she has a "two-legged home", meaning her fiancé who does not live with her. Johannes named both his partner's and his parents' houses as his homes. In these cases particularly, it is clear that the people make the home, or even are the home, rather than any building or the memories attached to material things. Paula discussed the country where she lived until she was sixteen:

> Roosa: *Is this your only home?*
>
> Paula: *Well at the moment yeah. Of course, there are other homes in my heart, so to speak, and [x country], for example, is still a really important place for me. Any particular building no longer exists that I can call home, but still every time I go to [x country] it feels like I'm home. That is a really good feeling and it's a kind of feeling that comes from being surrounded by things that are familiar to you and that have been important as a child and there are still important people there and of course people make the home. But as a building, this is the only home right now… this is the number one spot right now [laughs].*

The way Paula says, "of course people make the home" gives the impression that it is a shared sentiment among most people. As discussed in the beginning of the last subsection, among my participants, the meanings of home are heavily focused on home as a material entity. However, these other meanings such as people and memories of places that no longer exist can be found amidst the talk of buildings, furniture and atmosphere. After some time of discussing the matter with Eero, he told me: "Well… it is people who make [the home] in the end, now that I think about it". Here Eero discussed his parents home after being asked if it is the building that is important, like it is in their own home.

While other people play an important role in giving the home meaning, the role and position of the self is also crucial in how the home is made. The title of this subsection is from Paula's interview, where she discussed the coziness of their Airbnb space. She concluded that because she herself does not spent a lot of time in that space, it does not feel as cozy, and that "no matter how carefully one chooses furniture and so, it is not a home if there are no people there". In this context, she uses the term *people* to mean herself. Thus, home does not need to have *other* people to make it cozy, just oneself. This is perhaps obvious to people who live alone and have feelings of at-homeness in their dwellings but in the context of "people making the home", it is an important notion. For this reason this section does not only deal with other people being important to the meanings of home but that the self is also an important factor. It gives agency to oneself in creating feelings of at-homeness and not through the decisions of decoration but through one's own company. This also, for its part, explains people who are "at home on the road" or "postmodern nomads" (Rajanti 2010).

In addition to parents, partners, and self, children are an important aspect when giving meaning to home. Often, home feels more pleasant, when the children are there, running around (Pennartz 2006). Ritva said she has always chosen her apartments thinking about her children, what is the best option for them, where they have enough space. Johannes said that the only thing keeping his home from being ideal is that his children are not living with him full time. Teemu said that his children are the most important thing in his life, after them comes everything else. Out of eight lists made by my participants five included the word "family", often at the beginning of the list.

Paula brought up children when discussing her sleeping cat in one of the pictures she took. She said she never felt like she wanted to be a mother; her husband has his own children and she has her cats. She jokingly called herself a crazy cat lady. The cats also featured in the material part of their home. There were multiple drawings of black cats on the walls of Paula and her husband's home – similar to the actual pets I saw wandering around the house.

Animals were present in the research material of this study in many ways. If the research participants did not mention their pets when we were talking about home, they included

them in their lists or they took pictures of them. Six out of nine hosts had either dog or cat(s). To the research participants, the pets were part of the family, as can be seen from how Paula likens her cats to children.

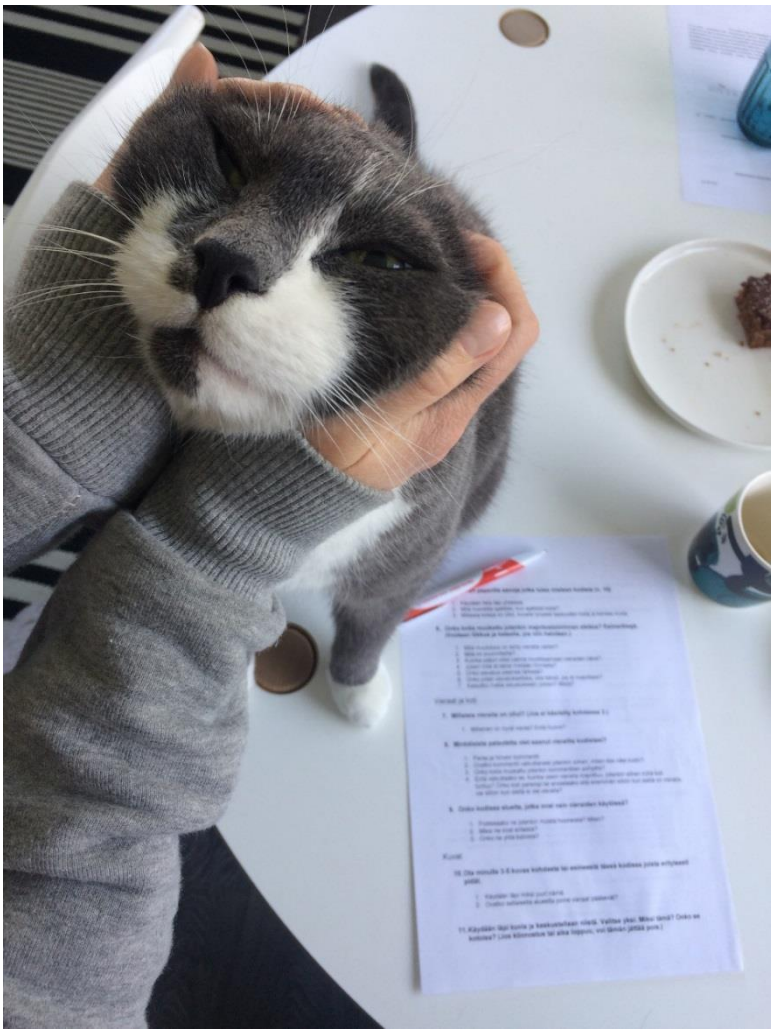

Figure 15 by Roosa. Pets are not only part of home, or the Airbnb experience to the guest: they were present in the interviews as well. This cat boy Hannu sat on the recorder in the middle of the interview.

The pets are not just part of the family – they are important part of the home. When Teija was asked what home is, one of the first things she said was that her home is where her cats are. Teija's cats were both present during the interview and the other one – Hannu – interrupted the conversation multiple times demanding petting. He also sat on the recorder (Figure 15). Maria said that in an ideal home she could get a dog or a cat. She included the freedom of being able to do that in her definition of home. She already had both and said that as long as the house was in good condition, it was her ideal home.

Because the pets are big part of the home, they also factor in my participants' Airbnb accommodation activity. Due to allergies and such it is important that hosts tell in their profiles if they have any pets in the house. Teija did so by putting up a picture of one of her cats on her listing (Figure 17). Ritva said that her cat is a big hit among her guests. The cat also featured in many of the comments left in her guestbook (Figure 16).

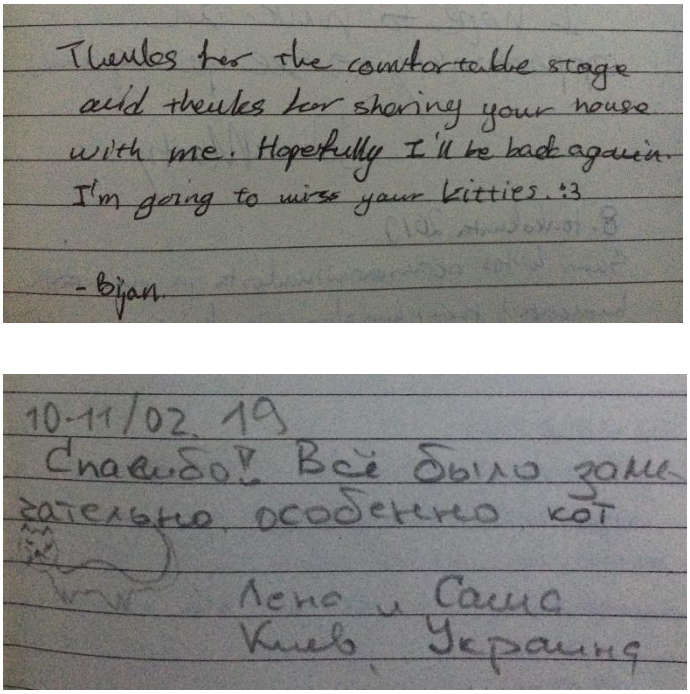

Figure 16 Entries from Ritva's guestbook featuring Seb the cat.

In Ritva's case, the cat is an important aspect of the home, but also a memorable feature of the Airbnb experience for guests. Sometimes precautions were needed when guests arrived to the pet household. Teija said that she has adjusted the windows of the spaces the Airbnb guests use so that they open only that much that the cats cannot fall out. Vilma and Eero said that their dog sometimes knocks down dishes from tabletops and that they need to firmly direct their guests to put their dishes to the dishwasher, instead of washing them themselves and leaving them on the table to dry (Figure 18). They also said that they sometimes leave their dog alone with the guests for short periods. This act shows that there are measures of trust between some hosts and their guests.

Figure 17 by Teija. Picture from Teija's Airbnb profile that features one of her cats.

Figure 18 by Vilma. This dog sometimes causes chaos by knocking dishes from tabletops. The young dog rested under the table we were sitting at during the interview.

The third theme in this section is the influence of childhood experiences to the creation of meanings of home. The earlier experiences shape the meanings a person gives to things later in life (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 87). The experiences under discussion in this section are ones that were shaped by other people's actions, mostly the participants parents'. Many of the research participants brought up experiences from their childhood, where there were many people in their homes. This could be a great amount of siblings while growing up, or other relatives visiting all the time. When a person has gotten used to having many people in the home, and (this is important) has enjoyed it, it is possible that he or she has created a preference to having one's home full of people. House full of people would then become one defining factor of home or feeling at home.

When asked if there were other people in his life growing up who accommodated people in one way or other, Jani mentioned a high amount of overnight visits per week with friends and cousins. Experiences such as these might have normalized the idea of letting other people to one's home and shaped the meanings of home. Here Teija answers a question

whether there are other people who have practiced some types of hospitality in her circle of friends or family:

> Teija: *I was the first one… in my circle of friends I think… Sure my mother has been- I have always lived with my mother just the two of us, and she used to have, I remember from my childhood we always had, we often had, her work friends or friends in this kind of a hotel for the brokenhearted [smiles]. So that whenever there was a break-up, they would come to live with us for a while.*
>
> Roosa: *Yeah.*
>
> Teija: *I remember that people have always been welcome to our home. So it might have become from there, that… example that the home is not such a secret place, others are welcome there too*.

Teija explains how her mother's actions have shaped her own meanings of home. This is an illustrative example of how the meanings come from the intrapersonal schemas that have developed overtime (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 102). Teija's mother's example, and Teija's positive attitude towards it, together have created a schema according to which decisions are made. For example, when Teija heard of Airbnb, her reaction was positive towards trying it because of the schema in her head. Of course, the final decision is made together with both intrapersonal and extrapersonal factors, also called mental structures and world structures, respectively (Strauss & Quinn 1997: 6).

In conclusion, family – including pets, people who live alone, and schemas learned from past families – is important to the meanings of home. "Home could be a synonym to the word family […]", wrote one participant of a study concerning home (Vilkko 2010: 11). However, family might be so integrated part of the home that it is taken for granted when talking of home. It is easy to concentrate on the material parts of it, to the *house*, especially in this context where the participants are being interviewed as Airbnb hosts, as well as the inhabitants of their homes. Nonetheless, the research material showed a great amount of evidence in support of the social dimension of home being important for the meanings of home. In the next section the social dimension is further explored, in the form of activity.

4.4 "Home is at the center of life"

> Roosa: *Then. Describe ideal home.*
>
> Teija: *Ideal home. I am in my ideal home right now. I think the ideal home is at the center of life. That it's kind of centric to what you do on a daily basis. […] It is important to me that it kind of functions in everyday life too.*

According to the research material, the home is (1) in the center of activity and life, a stronghold from which the inhabitant can visit the outside world or just observe it. It is also (2) a stage for activity and life, a stage that is the more comfortable the more life there is on it. In this section, these two topics are under discussion.

In the citation above Teija brings up the idea of home as being central to daily life, an idea that was also echoed in other interviews. Teija said that she wants her home to be in a central location to her daily life, she would prefer if she would not need a car. Teija found it inconvenient if she would have to commute from the other side of the city. She wished for a functional home and a functional home is in a good location to the inhabitant (Shove 2006). Jani wrote "stronghold" (*tukikohta*) in his list, and specified that "and that is meant specifically in a positive sense: not that I exclude other people, but that this is something for me from which I can take care of things to the outside world." (Jani). Home is a place where one resides and then when needed, visits somewhere, and then comes back. Preferably, this place is located somewhere close to the places that the inhabitant needs to visit often.

The idea of a home being the locus of life was expressed in many interviews. Johannes told me that "home shouldn't be too polished" so that one dares to live in it and feel relaxed. Teija said that the home shouldn't be too big that one does not need to spend all of one's time cleaning. The home is a stage for everyday life and it should be functional to fulfill its job. Paula, a designer by profession, gave high importance to the combination of looking nice and being functional. A functional home also had all the appliances that one needs to run a home.

In the lists, after adjectives that were used to describe home, the second largest group of words were verbs – what one does in their home. There were words dealing with rest and

sleeping, words for pottering about, twiddling, tinkering, and then words like growth and learning[7]. Home is a place for all these activities. Johannes was adamant that home, and especially his sauna, was the place where he had done much growth, learning, and self-improvement. Paula, who enjoyed cleaning and pottering about in her greenhouse, listed many activities on her list. Several participants wrote "life" (*elämä*) which includes the daily activities. Vilma wrote down "responsibility" (*vastuu*) and "daily life" (*arki*). These words support the idea that home is not a static place but defined by the life of the inhabitants and changing and transforming with them (Johansson & Saarikangas 2009).

Inspired by Miller (2001) and Pennartz (2006) I asked the research participants what room they thought of when thinking of home. The most common answer was a living room, next was a kitchen. However, the usual occurrence was that the living room and the kitchen formed one big space that the interview took place in and the hosts waved around and said: "this is the place I think of when I think of home". The unification of kitchen and living room appeared also in Tim Putnam's study (2006) where he discussed the new space "living kitchen" that succeeded the separate kitchen and formed a communal space for the family.

"The living kitchen" is the space that has the most activity in the home. Paula said that she has tried to make the Airbnb space as cozy as their own living quarters for example by adding house plants, but "maybe the fact that I don't spend as much time there myself is why it isn't so cozy in my opinion as it is here upstairs. […] I believe that life brings coziness." (Paula). The time spent in the space is important to the feelings of coziness. "A space that is not used becomes meaningless and is not experienced as being pleasant", writes Pennartz (2006: 104) about his findings. I conclude based on my material that the coziest room of the home is the one that has the most life in it.

This might also be the reason, why the bedroom did not come up when discussing the room that comes to mind when thinking of home. In modern Western or Westernized families,

[7] In Finnish: lepo, nukkuminen, puuhastelu, harrastaminen, kasvu, oppiminen

adults rarely spend much time in their rooms during the day and so the most activity happens in the living room or kitchen (Munro & Madigan 2006). This does not mean that the bedroom is not cozy, but it is a so-called back stage, used for resting or other rather intimate activities. One rarely let's guests into one's bedroom; it is more private than the more "public" living room used for entertaining guests and so, less activity locates in the bedroom.

Johansson and Saarikangas (2009: 10) write:

> *"The relationship between inhabitants and their dwelling space is reciprocal. Inhabitants, as corporeal subjects, spatialize a building in using it and acting in it, and hence shape the meanings of home".*

The activity of the people transform the building into a home. The home does not exist without inhabitants and their activity. "Home" is not something that exists without human interference, stable spot in time. Inhabitants are always needed in creating it and for giving it meaning. (Rajanti 2010). This was also evident in my study; the activity of the inhabitants, their daily life, gives meaning to the home.

4.5 "Home is something that is in my control"

> Roosa: *What do you think is home?*
>
> Ritva: *Oh that's a good question. My house, my rules. In the way that in your own home you can be as you like. And your own family can be on their own terms and…. I don't know, I think it's kind of like a freedom thing how I see the home. Everything is-- and I see it also as "my own", like that too. That I have not experienced home in those properties and apartments that are not my own, so it…*
>
> Roosa: *Like a question of ownership.*
>
> Ritva: *So that you really have your own home, where you can do as you want, and live as you like, and make it as you want. I see it somehow in terms of that kind of practical living. Where you can then be with the family as you wish.*

Ownership, mastery and control, greatly presented in Ritva's quote above, from together a theme that repeated in the interviews perhaps most constantly, although it was the least

mentioned theme according to the lists. All but one host described home as being in their control. Home was defined through control: controlling how the home looks, controlling how you behave in it, controlling or not having control over other people visiting. The lack of control that the activities of Airbnb guests sometimes caused was solely a negative feature. In this section, following themes are discussed: (1) the control over the appearance of the home, (2) the freedom to behave as one wishes, and (3) the power to control who comes to the home.

Being able to make the home look exactly as wanted was one of the aspects that defined home to the research participants. Many of them enjoyed decorating but all made sure to let it be known that they did not strictly follow any trends or buy something expensive just because of the status it brought. It was important that they made their home for themselves and not to someone else's ideals. "If it not good enough for them, then it can be so[8]", Johannes said about his home and other people's opinion about it. In the citation above, Ritva states that you can make the home as you want. Maria gave a similar answer to the question of what the home is like: "Well it is exactly like what I have made it myself" (Maria). Maria's statement exudes control and power over the place she calls home. Other participants said things like "the home is serene" (Paula) or "warm" (Jani), but Maria approached the whole concept of home from the perspective of owning it, and having it in total mastery.

For relatively new homeowners, owning a dwelling instead of renting one was an important factor. Teemu and Maria, who had lived in their homes for more than five years, did not mention this explicitly. Neither did the hosts who were tenants. Ritva, a recently new homeowner, said that because she knew that their previous homes were temporary, she did not want to attach memories to the buildings. Now that she owns their home, she does not need to restrict herself from doing that.

[8] In Finnish: Jossei se kelepaa niin olokoot sitten kelepaamatta.

Eero and Vilma discussed living in Helsinki in a rented apartment as opposed to owning their own:

> Eero: *I don't know about you but to me, I guess that the definition of home changed a bit when we bought this place. […] It was kind of always in the back of your head that if you wanted to do something to the apartments in Helsinki, either you couldn't or you just weren't interested enough… like nah why bother... I can always change apartments.*
>
> Vilma: *"I want to paint that wall but then I have to paint it back before I leave" and uh. Somehow it was always in your mind, even if it wasn't known when the time was to leave, you lived in such one-year-cycles somehow, that "well this is how it is this year, we'll see about it later…"*
>
> Eero: *Exactly.*

To Eero and Vilma, owning their home made it possible to renovate, for example paint the walls. However, what is perhaps more important than being allowed to renovate, is that with the ownership of the home came the will and energy to do so. As Eero said, even if it was allowed to do some changes to the apartment, he just didn't bother. To Vilma the issue was the temporality of living in rented apartment. You never knew when you had to leave, so it is just easier to do nothing.

Another important defining factor of home according to this study is that one can do what one wishes, behave as one wants. This includes being naked, being messy, being loud. It also includes the possibility to just be alone in peace and do nothing. Ritva in the citation at the beginning of the section underlines this freedom to behave like one wishes: "[…] in your own home you can be as you like. And your own family can be on their own terms […] I think it's kind of like a freedom thing how I see the home". Control and freedom seem to go hand in hand in this context. The inhabitants have the control over or mastery of the home space and thus are free to do whatever they want.

Unlike the physical appearance of the home, the behavior in the home does not depend on the ownership of the house or apartment. All research participants agreed that in one's home one can do what they want, starting from Ritva in the beginning of this section: "you

can be with your family as you wish". Paula said that in home "one can be any which way one wants".

The control over behavior extends to other people. First, the inhabitant of the home can decide who she or he lets in the home. Both Jani and Maria mentioned this right at the beginning when defining home. When describing home, Jani stated: "You don't need to let anyone extra in if you don't want to". Maria explained the following:

> Roosa: *What is a home?*
>
> Maria: *Well it is that kind place where I live, where my own personal things are and then what is kind of in my own control*
>
> Roosa: *What is home like?*
>
> Maria: *What is it like… the home…well it is exactly like what I have made it myself… pretty much like that and I can very well tell someone that they don't need to come here and so on… so it is controlled by me also.*

A certain absoluteness and unapologetic attitude can be detected from Maria's words: "I can very well tell someone that they don't need to come here […]" (*ja mä voin kyl sanoo jollekin et ei tarvi tänne tulla)*. The words might have also been translated from Finnish to "I can tell them they are not welcome here", because of the idiomatic use of the words "you do not need to come here" in Finnish. Home is also a place from where you can exclude people. *Private*, even if the word itself was used notably little. Only Ritva described home as private, but the idea of privacy is there just in the form of *control*.

5 Motives for Sharing One's Home

> Roosa: *Why did you start hosting on Airbn-*
>
> Vilma: *MONEY. No. Well in theory…yes.*
>
> Eero: *Well it was. It was money that was upmost [reason] because there really, honestly was an extra room. It felt so weird when you moved from Helsinki from a small one-bedroom apartment so it felt like, like easy money… it helps with everyday spendings.[…] And also… it was just fun to test what this is like, what kind of people would come.*

When explaining the motivations behind their Airbnb activity in the interview quote above, Vilma and Eero began with money but quickly expanded to other, quite different kinds of reasons and included extra space and a desire to experiment, perhaps curiosity, too. In my conversations with my research participants, three motives for taking part in Airbnb hosting emerge above others from the hosts' responses: money, extra space, and hosting as a hobby or way of life. Other less stressed reasons include meeting new people and cultures, company, desire to experiment, offering accommodation to those who need it, and reciprocity. The answers given in the questionnaire are mostly in line with the ones given in the interviews. The most notable difference was that money as a motive for hosting had a more prominent position in the questionnaire than in the interviews. The hosts' motives can be placed on the Wilk and Cliggett's (2007) social-temporal grid based on the amount of people they took in to account in their decisions to start hosting and keep hosting. The three biggest motives have to do with self and sometimes close family. These are on the self-centered side of the axis. At the other end of the spectrum, there are the more altruistic motives such as *supplying accommodation to those who need it* and *reciprocity*. These are motives in which the hosts include future people they are yet to meet in their decision-making, as well as other stakeholders such as the Airbnb company. The other motives fall between these two ends of the spectrum. I have used the selfishness-altruism continuum in organizing this chapter, starting from the motives that include the least amount of people in the decision-making.

5.1 "MONEY. No. Well in theory… yes"

The three motives that were most often mentioned in the interviews and placed highest in importance in the questionnaire are *money, extra space* and *Airbnb as a hobby* (Table 2). In this thesis, as in Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) study regarding Airbnb hosting in the Helsinki metropolitan area, the financial gain was often the initial motivating factor and after some time other, social factors gained importance. From the interviews, I detected two different ways that the hosts talked about money: money that is needed and money that is extra.

Discourse about desired or needed money was typical to people who in one way or the other were in a situations where the money that Airbnb hosting brings significantly helps them with paying rent or other essentials of daily life. Paula, Jani, Teemu and Teija all live in larger dwellings than the size of their family suggests they would need, and have decided to use Airbnb to help with the living expenses. To all of them, Airbnb hosting brings substantial income that helps with living. Paula and her husband live in a detached house and she said that the money from Airbnb hosting has "definitely eased [their] financial burden" and it was "of course one of the reasons why [they] started hosting". In Jani's case, he first started hosting in his last apartment out of curiosity but when he moved into another apartment, money was the primary reason why he decided to start hosting again. He carried on to explain that he had a stable job when he tried Airbnb hosting the first time and now he lives considerably below the poverty line.

Some hosts also discussed income from Airbnb as being a "nice little extra". For these hosts primary reasons for hosting were the will to experiment, helping with the overall accommodation situation in their home town or extra space in the house that was "just sensible" to rent out. In these cases, the financial gain was not as important as in the first category where the money was needed. As Johannes put it: "well it is nice to get some earnings, but it isn't important". It was also possible to first start with "needing" the money, and when the economic situation changed over the years, to keep hosting to get "a little extra". The hosts often used the money to fund their Airbnb activity or traveling. The money also had some unexpected child-rearing uses. Ritva said that she had made a deal with her children: if the kids wanted something extra, they needed to agree to get more

guests and help with changing sheets and such. She wanted to teach her kids where the money for their nice things come from, and that you need to work to get it.

These findings regarding the monetary motive go well together with Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) results they got from their qualitative research executed in the Helsinki metropolitan area. They also detected these two different finance-related motives and similar uses for the profit. However, in their study, "little extra" was more common than the "need" motive while in my own research participants' motives were almost equal with slightly more importance placed on "need" according to the questionnaire.

	MOTIVES WHEN STARTING TO HOST	MOTIVES NOW
1.	Money	Money
2.	Extra space	Hobby / way of life
3.	Meeting different people	Extra space
4.	Desire to experiment	Meeting different people
5.	Hobby / way of life	Supplying accommodation to those who need it
6.	Supplying accommodation to those who need it	Company
7.	Company	Reciprocity / sharing economy
8.	Reciprocity / sharing economy	Desire to experiment

Table 2 The overall ranking of motives when all answers were put together. The research participants ranked their motives to start hosting and motives to keep hosting in the questionnaire.

In the interviews, while many answered that money was one of the motives, the hosts tended to talk more about other motives or just mentioned that hosting also brings more income but did not linger on the answer. In the questionnaire 50% of the hosts stated that

money was the most important reason to host. The rest placed money on the second or third place in importance out of eight options (Table 2).

This difference between the answers given in the interviews and the questionnaire might be caused by the cultural ideas people have about talking about money or income with strangers. In the questionnaire, they just needed to click a few buttons to state their opinion of the importance of money as a motive for their Aibnb hosting. In the interview however, they were face to face with a living person who might question their answer or ask more questions about it. Especially in the circumstance where they needed the money, the host might find it uncomfortable to talk about that motive to the interviewer. It might also be that the obviousness of the money as a motivator made the participants talk more about other motives during the interviews but place it first in the questionnaire. However, according to the interviews, money and home together seem to have a curious relationship and the hosts had certain ideals about renting their homes out via Airbnb: doing it "for the money" versus "liking it" and the "original idea" of Airbnb.

Teija said that even if the income from Airbnb helps her with her unexpected renovation expenses, if she ever starts "doing it for the money" it is a sign that she needs to stop. Ritva's opinion was that one simply can't host on-site just for the money:

> Ritva: *There was this one guest who somehow could not comprehend… did not want to understand… they talked about [my hosting] as an avocation. So I was a little annoyed by it because like… yes, but I like it. Like they saw it only as an economic thing ... that they would do it just to get money. Well that can't succeed! And you can't do it! If you yourself live there, then it is inevitably like this. You need to like it.*

Teija and Ritva's comments about the motivational force of money tell more about the way the hosts see their homes than is a "real fact". One *can* rent out one's home for money, even if one hates doing it or is doing it just *for the money* and no other motive as Teija puts it. These hosts just do not want to do so. Their definition or meaning of *home* is such that does not allow them to monetize it "coldheartedly" just for the money. Ritva even goes so far as to claim that no one can do so.

Several hosts also mentioned the "original idea" of Airbnb and said that their hosting more closely approximated that. To them the "original", and between the lines *the better,* way of doing Airbnb is hosting in your own home either using a spare space like a guestroom or couch or when you were out of town yourself and the home was empty. To continue this line of thinking, the "wrong" or the "worse" way is doing the opposite; the more businesslike way of renting out your investment property on Airbnb for *higher profit*. If getting more money or enjoying the money from hosting was seen as more businesslike activity, and they took pride in implementing the "original idea", the hosts might not advertise that particular motive for hosting.

It is also possible that emphasizing the need for the money which Airbnb hosting brought in, narrowed the line between hosting "just for the money" and hosting "because I like it" discussed above, and thus the hosts avoided it. Making money with one's home can be problematic because of the meanings both home and money have. In contemporary western world money can be seen as a necessary evil; one needs it, but being greedy or desiring money and material stuff over happiness of the family is frowned upon. If home in turn is seen as an innocent safe haven of the family, mixing money with it can produce answers such as Vilma's "MONEY. No. Well in theory… yes"; a sarcastic exclamation about money being the reason for hosting, then backtracking and then finally admitting the importance of it as a motivational force.

When asked why they would stop hosting, several people started saying that if they "won the lottery" or got their dream job they would stop, suggesting that they would then have enough money to stop hosting, but before they got to the ending of the sentence, they hesitated and changed their minds. They ended up concluding that they might cut the hosting down a little but not necessarily stop completely. There are couple of possible explanations for this. Either they realized that by saying they would stop hosting if they had more income they would imply that they are indeed, hosting *for the money.* Another explanation is that they realized in the middle of the sentence that what they were about to say was not true; that they in fact *like hosting*, like Ritva said, or have other important motives rather than money to do it. Moreover, that phrases like "if a won the lottery I would stop this and that" are common sentences we westerners like to say without thinking them

through. I believe it is unlikely that a person would drop all his or her routines just because he or she won some money.

Yet another reason for the hesitation is a mix between being sensible and greedy: why stop the easy flow of even more income even if you did win the lottery? Johannes repeated several times during our interview that hosting "just was sensible". According to this and my other material, the decision to start hosting was made weighting the positive and negative effects it might cause. What is considered as the positives and negatives varies between individuals, their values and what motivates them. If more income is desired and being sensible is a valued characteristic in a person, it would make sense to keep hosting even after winning the lottery until more effects that are negative appeared and the sensibility of the activity needed to be revalued. Be the money the most important motivational force for hosting like the questionnaire suggests or not, other factors are needed in realizing the hosting activity. Extra space in the home one can monetize is an essential one and I will discuss it next.

Extra space

The second primary motive for taking part in Airbnb hosting is extra space. In this context "extra" means space that the host *feels* is additional or unnecessary to them. In this study, I detected two different types of extra space: (1) extra space that has no other function than housing guests, for example a traditional guest room, and (2) a space that has a function in the host's daily life, but is empty some of the time.

The first type of extra space was more common. There are multiple reasons the hosts become to possess extra space in their homes. The room might have been a children's room before they left home and so it became to be without a purpose. The room might have been a guest room, and the owner decided to increase its utilization by taking in Airbnb guests in addition to "regular guests". The house might have been bought with the expectation of more people living there somewhere in the future.

For example, Paula and her husband had this first type of extra space: "We noticed that the ground floor is a kind of separate space, so we thought it was really easy to split a piece of the house and rent it out, because we don't need that space ourselves." In my sample, their

hosting activity was the closest to a business-like hosting. The space downstairs used to be an office space and it has its own entrance, kitchen and a toilet. I still decided to include Paula and her husband's home in my study, because they shared some of the spaces with their guests, like the shower, and Paula often welcomed guests upstairs. Paula was one of the hosts that answered to the Facebook post, and it is important that she herself felt that their Airbnb hosting fit the description. Clearly, she did not think her hosting to be business-like but rather sharing her own home.

Johannes' hosting is an example of the space that was extra some of the time. He rents out his own bedroom every other week, when his children are not at home, and he more often than not spends the nights at his partner's place. He ended up having an empty apartment just sitting there and as his reason to start hosting he repeatedly said: "it was just sensible". From this study's sample, Johannes was the only one who practiced this type of hosting where the host is not present during the visit. However, similar activity was noted in Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) study were 45% of the participants practiced "remote hospitality". Johannes did sometimes stay at his own home when there were guests present however. In this situation, he slept in his child's room.

Most of the hosts shared the feeling of satisfaction when their space's utility increased. The repeating word when talking about the extra space was *turhaan,* meaning: "with no purpose". Here Eero and Vilma discuss the extra space in their home:

> Eero: *We have discussed it that now that we have this extra space, we need to take advantage of it.*
>
> Vilma: *that the room just sits there empty without any purpose.*

Eero, in the quotation in the beginning of the chapter, compares their home to the one-bedroom apartment they lived in in Helsinki. Taking into account the relatively high price per square meter and the average amount of space per person in cities in Finland, having empty space "with no purpose" can feel stupid. For the hosts it was a positive change to utilize the square meters of the home better. As Paula stated:

> Paula: *It is so extra space for us, so it feels like a good solution to use it for something, because it is relatively easy to do so.*

The importance of extra space also came up when asked why the hosts would stop hosting. Both Johannes and Teija answered that if someone else would be permanently living with them, they would stop hosting. In Johannes' case, it would be his children, and he would no longer have an empty apartment every other week. Teija also, referring to a future spouse, would not have enough space for an extra person, however, her answer can also be understood from the perspective of company. More about that in chapter 5.2.

Even if in this context, we discuss the *feeling* of having extra space that one wishes to utilize somehow, having *concrete* extra space is crucial for hosting unlike any other motive: the guests need a space to sleep. Even if the host stopped having the *need* for money, company or hobbies (if he/she for example got a better paying job, started a relationship, or found other ways to spent one's time) he/she does not necessarily need to stop hosting. However, if one stops having extra space, one would have to stop. Space is the only imperative that the host needs to have to be able to host. Put in other words, it does not matter how much a person would like to host, needs the money or wants the company, if one does not have the space. In this context when the extra space is not absolute, but relative, one can stop having extra space even if the actual space still exists. For example, one might suddenly be in need of a home office so the Airbnb room, the space to spare, is the space used for that. Alternatively, one might just start feeling cramped in the home and decide that she or he needs more space just for him or herself. The extra space is a motive to host only as long as the hosts *feel* that the space is extra.

Hosting as a hobby

The third big motive in the questionnaire seeing Airbnb as a hobby. This is not necessarily a reason to start hosting, but it is an important reason to *keep* hosting, like we can see in Table 2. Either the research participants came to enjoy hosting after some time of doing it, or they had already gotten a positive impression of it from other hosts. Ritva offered the strongest opinion from my sample relating to hosting being a hobby; when I asked why she would stop hosting, she answered: "I think I will not stop. And I don't know what the reason would be that would make me stop".

When discussing what Airbnb hosting is, all the hosts agreed that Airbnb hosting is not work. All said it did not require enough of them or pay enough money to qualify as work. During the summer season, it got closer to being work, according to Eero and Vilma, when the amount of guests increased, but other than that, it was just changing sheets and washing them, and little extra cleaning. Only Ritva and Teemu referred to their hosting activity as work. Ritva because when she began hosting she was still a student and did it as a sort of a summer job, so that she could stay home with her children during the summer. Now that she has a stable job, she still decides to host because she enjoys it and regards it as a hobby. When it comes to Teemu, he mentioned hosting as a "kind of a second job". His listing's capacity is highest of the sample, nine people simultaneously, and he claimed to have once hosted 13 guests at the same time. With numbers like this, also the income becomes higher thus "qualifying" as work. On a scale of values, he said he puts Airbnb hosting after work but before other hobbies:

> Teemu: *On my scale of values it is close to… children are of course the number one, my family, my health, wellbeing, work, perhaps after work comes Airbnb and then perhaps other hobbies.*
>
> Roosa: *Right.*
>
> Teemu: *Because in principle this is a second job for me to some extent. Even if it does not always feel like work. But then sometimes it does feel, when you wash nine sheets and then make the beds for the next eight guests and clean this two hundred squares at the same time. And no one is here to help me. Except the kids sometimes but… [takes a sip of tea] It is substantial.*

To Teemu, Airbnb hosting moves fluidly between work and hobby depending on the amount of work he needs to put in and the income he gets from it. Jani jokingly said about Airbnb hosting that: "it is not work because if it was I would not do it". He continued to say that one does not need to do Airbnb hosting "in the very Finnish way of slaving away"[9]

[9] Original Finnish: perin suomalaisesti että pitäs olla sillee niinku… raataa tätä hommaa

but can instead take it easy and relax. Paula mentioned that she does not "experience Airbnb hosting as hard work" and that she enjoys cleaning. Paula and Johannes both said that they enjoy their home more when the hosting activity makes them clean more.

From all of the above we can take note that when the hosts discussed why Airbnb in not work, they used words such as "hard" and "slaving" when describing work, while Airbnb activity could be "taken easily" and "enjoyed". From this, I make a conclusion that the hosts share an idea of work being hard, heavy or unpleasant, and as the hosting activity was not, it could not be taken as work. Eero gave another reason why Airbnb hosting is not a job: it does not pay enough to be one. He said that the profit goes hand in hand with the work put into hosting, and while the work is very little, so is the profit.

When asked what the hosting is then, if not work, most host ended up saying it is kind of like a hobby. Johannes, who had only started hosting couple of months before the interview, said that it is not a hobby yet, but it might become one. Teemu, in the quote above says: "[…] Airbnb and then perhaps **other** hobbies", and thus refers to Airbnb as a hobby even if he did not straight up say so. Paula also ended up using the word "hobby" but framed it as *"se menee harrastuksesta"* which translates to "goes for a hobby" instead of "is a hobby":

> Paula: *Well I guess it goes for a hobby. I'm a bit of a tidiness freak, you can't necessarily notice right now but [laughs], but I like to keep the downstairs clean, and washing the laundry is no problem for me, even if there is mountains of it sometimes… So yes, it kind of goes for a hobby among other things like that. I don't experience it as heavy work or think that "well, I just had to start doing this too". I've never had to regret that I started doing this, so yes it goes for a hobby among these other things*.

Other hosts had similar responses as Paula. Many enjoyed that their house was clean, and having guests over "made" them clean more often or more throughoutly. This positive outcome of more clean and comfortable home that came from taking part in Airbnb hosting curiously took Airbnb hosting further away from *work* and closer to *a hobby*. Enjoyment is clearly a feature *a hobby* has and *work* does not. Here Ritva gets comfortable with the idea of Airbnb being hobby:

> Roosa: *So if at first it was kind of like a part-time job and now it is more like a hobby?*
>
> Ritva: *Well… yes. It is like a hobby. Of course it kinda makes some things possible, that there is that certain income, so we can think about it from that point of view, but it is not a necessity. So, [sighs] of course you get that income, but it's so… it's not so significant anymore. A hobby. Indeed.*

In her answer, Ritva struggles with linking an activity that is dear to her and getting income from doing it. The income aspect seems to be the problematic part that in her mind does not belong with hobbies in traditional way. This hesitation to call Airbnb a hobby can be also seen from Paula's way of wording from the quote above; the way she used "goes for a hobby", instead of just saying it is one. The hosts seem to hesitate calling Airbnb a hobby perhaps because of the same reasons it is not work: it does not fit the definition they have in their minds of a work or a hobby. If work is hard, heavy, uncomfortable, and pays substantial money, and Airbnb hosting does not fit the definition, it is not regarded as work. I draw a conclusion from my material that a hobby is not supposed to bring in income, and so Airbnb is not regarded as being that either, but in lack of a better word, the hosts end up with "a sort of hobby".

It is also possible, that the hosts had not previously thought of *what* Airbnb hosting is to them. Only Jani and Maria said the word "hobby" themselves, in other interviews I needed to bring the word up myself. The questionnaire was filled months after the interviews, and during that time, the research participants had time to go through the topics discussed in the interviews. The *hobby/way of life* motive placed second in the importance to keep hosting in the questionnaire (see Table 2), which means that the hosts have come to conclusion that Airbnb hosting is a hobby for them, and also that it is an important motivating factor to keep hosting.

The motive *desire to experiment* should be included with these three big motives for two reasons. First, because it was a big motivator to start hosting. In a way, *desire to experiment* is a counterpart to *hobby/way of life,* because the latter replaced the former when moving from reasons to *start* hosting to reasons to *keep* hosting. Second, because *desire to experiment*, like *money*, *space* and *hobby* only includes self and the immediate family in

the decision-making. The next motives for sharing one's home, even if still quite self-interested, include the aspect of other people and company to the reasons to host.

5.2 "The world has come to visit us"

> Roosa: *How do you feel about meeting new people or encountering different cultures or things like this, it that a reason to do this or..?*
>
> Ritva: *Yeah. I find it extremely interesting, and in my day job I don't get to the level I get in this accommodation thing, when I get into these conversations. And then at that time especially when we did this a lot more, it was just an insane cultural immersion for the kids. We spoke a lot of English. It is like, now I also think of this as a parent that…. that this was extremely eye opening for the children, in terms of tolerance education, the fact that they learn to see strangers. And when we could not travel, and we rarely can now, I have often said that the world, the world has come to visit us. So yes I myself am so human loving and interested in cultures that it is like such an opportunity… and I take it as an opportunity. […]I like them, those different cultures, and then on the other hand, everyone is… the same… ultimately, and that's what children learn too.*

Ritva's quote above shows a great example of the next group of motives I am going to discuss: *meeting different people* and *company*. These also include meeting different cultures and the conversations had with guests. In these motives, the amount of people who play a part in the decision to start and keep hosting goes beyond self and immediate family. All the motives in this group deal with the relationship between the host(s) and the guest(s). Following Wilk and Cliggett's grid, these motives are more altruistic than the previous four motives – money, extra space, hobby and desire to experiment – were.

In the questionnaire meeting different people came in fourth in importance to keep hosting and third in starting hosting (Table 2). In the interviews, some of the hosts expressed enthusiasm for meeting people from other cultures, and some grouped all the guests together and paid no mind to the origin of the guest. Maria and Ritva especially mentioned the culture aspect, and meeting new people from other cultures. Ritva, on the citation above brought forward her vast interest in other cultures and the benefits of meeting different people from the perspective of child rearing. Maria started hosting to offer accommodation

to the FIS Nordic World Ski Championships visitors. Here she explains why she continued hosting after the championships were over:

> Maria: *It was just an experimental thing, it was nothing like…it just was. And then when that room had been put in order like that, then I thought I might keep it open there. So it is not an actual purpose of earning income at all. A hobby. That you see, see other people and get to know others and… a little bit of different cultures and it's kind of nice when they always talk a little when they are here.*

Jani talked of *different* people as well as *different* nationalities, which include both Finnish people and people from other cultures:

> Jani: *I like to be in touch with different… different nationalities and different people, talk, because I can expand their consciousness and they expand my consciousness so it's nice because then I always look at things from a different point of view, so I like that kind of communication with people.*

While meeting new and different people and learning more from them was definitely a merit for most of the hosts, a more specific aspect of the sociability rose above others: conversations. This can be seen both in Jani's and Maria's quotes above where they use words such as "talk a little" and "communicate with people" as positive features of having guests over. In the third and final task in the questionnaire, the hosts had to rate the motives I had phrased as sentences (see Table 3). This task had eleven sentences, whereas the other two tasks had only eight motives for the hosts to rate. From these sentences, "the conversations I have had with the guests" placed straight after the money, space and hobby motives, and before "meeting different cultures". "I wish more human contacts in my life" was placed last from these three company-related motives and second to last overall. Johannes was the only one practicing remote hospitality from this sample, and even he said he enjoyed the conversations when he was around to have them:

> Johannes: *I enjoy talking with people very much in general and… interesting conversations. It is one of the top things in this. You see a lot and hear a lot… very interesting guests… there has been already, even if I've had only ten so far…*

The enjoyment the hosts got from the conversations they had was palpable. They retold stories from the guests and in Ritva's case, continued the conversations with other guests from similar geographical areas. Teemu said that he encourages conversations and hopes he gets to have them with guests. The research participants that I visited overnight, continued talking with me after the interviews. Topics varied from cats to gym preferences and had mostly nothing to do with the research. My participatory observation supports what was said in the interviews; the hosts do enjoy having conversations with the guests.

MOTIVES PHRASED AS SENTENCES OVERALL RATING

	Task number 4: How important to your Airbnb hosting activity are the following statements? 0 = not important at all, 4 = very important / *Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat väittämät ovat majoitustoimintasi kannalta? 0 = ei lainkaan tärkeä, 4 = erittäin tärkeä.*
1.	**There is (extra) space in my home, which is easy to rent out via Airbnb / *Kodissani on (ylimääräistä) tilaa, joka on helppo laittaa Airbnb-käyttöön* (4,0)**
2.	**I get money to support covering home expenses / *Saan rahaa tukemaan kodin kulujen kattamista* (3,3)**
3.	**For me, Airbnb hosting is a hobby or lifestyle / *Airbnb-majoittaminen on minulle harrastus tai elämäntapa* (3,3)**
4.	**The extra income is nice and relatively easy to get / *Ylimääräinen tulo on mukavaa ja sen saaminen suhteellisen helppoa* (3,0)**
5.	**My conversations with guests / *Käymäni keskustelut vieraiden kanssa* (2,8)**
6.	**Encountering different cultures / *Eri kulttuurien kohtaaminen* (2,5)**
7.	**I want to supply accommodation to people / *Haluan tarjota ihmisille mahdollisuuden majoittua* (1,8)**
8.	**I want to try what Airbnb hosting is like / *Haluan kokeilla, minkälaista Airbnb-majoittaminen on* (1,5)**
9.	**I also use Airbnb as a guest and by hosting I give back / *Käytän Airbnb:tä myös vieraana ja majoittamalla annan takaisin* (1,3)**
10.	**I wish more human contacts in my daily life / *Kaipaan enemmän ihmiskontakteja arkeeni* (1,3)**

11.	**I want my home to have a high occupancy rate / *Haluan että kotini käyttöaste on korkea* (1,3)**

Table 3 The overall rating of motives phrased as sentences. Final task in the questionnaire to the hosts. The number at the end of each statement is the average grade the hosts gave from zero to four, four being the highest.

Company as a motive was rated by the hosts third to last and second to last in reasons to keep and start hosting, respectively, with relatively high gap to the motives rated higher (Table 2). However, having the need for company in one's home came up frequently in the interviews.

> Teija: *It is nice that sometimes there is someone I can say good morning to and… chat a little.*

Teija lives alone with her two cats and says that as an introvert she prefers meeting new people in her home, where she feels she is on her home turf.

> Paula: *I am interested in meeting new people and like I said earlier, I am here alone a lot and if the people really want to come to ours, then welcome.*

Paula works from home a lot and she said because of that she sees very few people. She enjoys talking with the guests and invites them to have coffee with her upstairs when she feels like it, even though the guests' quarters are all on the first floor. For both Teija and Paula there exists a need for company that Airbnb hosting fulfils. Other hosts from the sample expressed similar sentiments. Some were divorced and enjoyed having other people than their children to talk to at home, in some cases the children had moved from home and there were less activity in the house than before. In chapter four we came to the conclusion that the home was the most comfortable where there was life. Keeping this in mind, it makes sense to bring more people to the home, in order to make it even more comfortable.

Teija said she would quit Airbnb, if someone moved permanently in. Previously, I mentioned it might be because there would be less space. However, presumably, the other

person would move into her bedroom and the guestroom would stay guestroom (extra space). It is true that the apartment might be a bit more crowded then, but it is also possible that the space is not the key point here, but the company. She said she hosts because she wants to "keep up the ability to live with other people and not become a total hermit". The company the partner offers would stop this need and the Airbnb guests would no longer be needed in this sense. There would be someone to say "good morning" to without guests.

Relating to the amount of activity in the home an interesting pattern could be detected from the interviews: many of the hosts had had many people in their homes while they were growing up. Some had relatively large amount of siblings, others had relatives living in the same town and cousins would stay at their homes many nights a week and vice versa. In chapter four, we discussed Teija's mother's friends staying in their "hotel for the broken hearted" and it affecting the way she sees home. It seems that many of the hosts are used to having many people in their homes, and when there are not, Airbnb hosting is one of the ways to rectify the situation.

5.3 "I wanted them to get some accommodation"

> Roosa: *For how long have you hosted?*
>
> Maria: *From the time there was that ski championships here, 2017 I think?*
>
> Roosa: *Perhaps [laugher, has no idea of any championships]*
>
> Maria: *Was it…? Yeah 2017. So, then there was a terrible shortage of accommodation so I thought I'd put that notice over there. I took some pictures of the rooms and see if anyone is booking. […] I kind of wanted the guests of the competition… to get to some accommodation.*

The motives in this group are *supplying accommodation to those who need it* and *reciprocity.* These are the closest to the altruistic end of the social continuum. Wilk and Cliggett's grid moves from self-centered to altruistic, but also in time from present to future. The motives in this group deal with more distant future than the guests already booked and money received. If the motives in chapter 5.1 dealt with self and immediate family and 5.2 concentrated on hosts-quest interactions, in this subsection the motives relate to the needs of other people and other stakeholders more independently from the

hosts' needs. However, according to this study Airbnb hosting is never truly altruistic because none of the hosts would keep hosting, if they felt it was too much trouble or unbeneficial to them.

A certain type of altruism or will to help others was present in several interviews. This motive is named *supplying accommodation to those who need* it and it placed fifth out of eight in importance as a motive to keep hosting (Table 2). Several people mentioned that they want to offer a place to stay to people who would not otherwise get a room. These people might be event guests and the hotels are fully booked or people who might not be able to afford a hotel room in the first place. Maria paid attention to cultural differences in choosing Airbnb over hotel. She noted that her Indian guests preferred Airbnb and the opportunity to cook their own food, to a traditional hotel.

Ritva, as well as Vilma and Eero brought up Airbnb as a "creator of opportunities". In their opinion, Airbnb makes it possible to travel e.g. to the countryside where there might not be hotels, and gives the opportunity to travel to those who are less wealthy. Here we need to take into account the advertisement of the Airbnb company, and how it had might have helped create these positive ideas of Airbnb as a creator of opportunities. However, the hosts seemed happy to be part of this sharing economy (as they agreed Airbnb to be part of sharing economy when asked) but they said it was not a motive to host.

None of the hosts brought up the terms sharing economy, collaborative consumption or sustainability without prompting, but all of them agreed that Airbnb was part of sharing economy. The idea of *reciprocity*, however, did come up unprompted in two separate interviews. Vilma and Eero said that they use Airbnb a lot when they travel and they want to "give back to Airbnb". The idea of "giving back" is common in the Couch Surfing community, where it is seen as bad manners to just stay at other people's couches and never offer your own couch to others (Habibi, Kim & Laroche 2016: 285). Couch Surfing is in many studies the prime example of sharing economy, because the community rules forbid taking payment, and thus "forcing" the host and guest to "pure sharing" (Habibi, Kim & Laroche 2016). None of the hosts in this study had used Couch Surfing or other hosting sites and most of them had no desire to. Only Jani had a Couch Surfing account but he had never used it. It is curious that the idea of giving back can be found in Airbnb, where the

monetary aspect takes away the need to reciprocate that is present in non-monetary practices such as Couch Surfing (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015).

Jani also brought up the idea of reciprocity, but from a different perspective. He wanted his room to be the cheapest room in the city. He wanted to set an example that you can do it this way, without seeking a huge profit. He also said that he hopes that when he travels, he would find a cheap accommodation for himself:

> Jani: *I have this kind of "let the good get around[10]" mindset that I hope that when I rent this room out cheap to people, I hope that when I go on vacation someone there will rent me a room cheap, too. That it would kind of set an example… send a little bit of a message to the world that you can do it like this too.*

[10] In Finnsh: ”annan hyvän kiertää”.

6 Change and Control of the Home

This chapter combines the themes of the last two, bringing together the meanings of home and the motives to partake in Airbnb hosting. The main arguments I make in this chapter relate to (1) the hosts' responses to change, and (2) the aspect of control. When taking part in Airbnb hosting, changes are inevitable. A new bed, towels, sheets, board for the WI-FI password, guestbook – these are the most common changes in the hosts' homes. Even if the host has an already-made guestroom and decides to bypass password boards and guestbooks, there are still behavioral changes. However, the hosts largely denied and/or justified changes to home. They rejected the idea of changing the home to please other people and demanded control over the home and the Airbnb hosting activity. In this chapter, I first go through the physical changes the hosting activity has "caused" to the home and the denial of them. Then we move on to the behavioral changes. The third section concentrates on the justification of the change, and in the fourth section, control of the home is under discussion as well as losing control.

6.1 Physical Changes in the Home and the Denial

> Roosa: *Does the room where the Airbnb dudes stay at differ from these other spaces in terms of decoration or coziness or something else?*
>
> Johannes: *Well maybe it differs in a way…well there are two beds in the guestroom. Without [Airbnb] there would be one. And then… well I can't think of anything else relating to decoration. There is, it is taken into consideration that… the guests, where they put their things and so. Things like that.*
>
> Roosa: *Is that clothes rack one of those?*
>
> Johannes: *Yeah.*

As can be seen form the citation above, the hosts changed their homes in some ways because of their Airbnb hosting activity. There were both physical changes and changes in behaviour. In this section I first concentrate on the physical changes in the home and then move on to examine how even if there clearly were some changes, the hosts first denied

there being any. There were two points the hosts repeatedly made: not making changes if they themselves did not want them, and that the changes were not permanent.

The changes Johannes described above were the most common. Furniture, coat hangers, mirrors and extension cords were added and new linen and towels were bought. Some things were added in anticipation of guests' future needs and some were reactions to suggestions from guests. Here Eero explains how he and Vilma anticipated guests' needs when they purchased a Wi-Fi amplifier:

> Eero: *Well we did modify this place that much that we got that Wi-Fi amplifier, […] So that the internet works in that upstairs room also, that much we modified. And we were strongly thinking of Airbnb while doing that… But we did not get feedback on that either, but then, we got that amplifier almost right away so there was really no time [to get feedback]. [The internet] worked, but badly.*

Eero said that they noticed that the internet worked badly in the upstairs guestroom that the Airbnb guests used and they purchased Wi-Fi amplifier before the guests commented on the quality of the internet. Jani is an example of the other type that reacted to guests' wishes:

> Roosa: *Have the guests had any needs or suggestions that you have fulfilled, or haven't fulfilled?*
>
> Jani: *One thing that I was gonna do before you came here but I forgot […] was that two people have wished for a mirror. So that there would be like a small mirror one could use for example to get ready in the morning and so. So I need to buy that.*

Jani continued that he himself would not have thought of getting a mirror, because he does not need one himself. He said it was a good thing that the guests suggested getting one. Many hosts had gotten brochures of events and sights in Oulu to put on tables for the guests or planned to get some. Changes or additions to the home that the research participants did not mention but that I could observe include signs on doors that guide the guests (Figure 19) and complimentary things like shampoo bottles labelled "guests" in the bathroom or a bottle of water and glasses left to the guestroom.

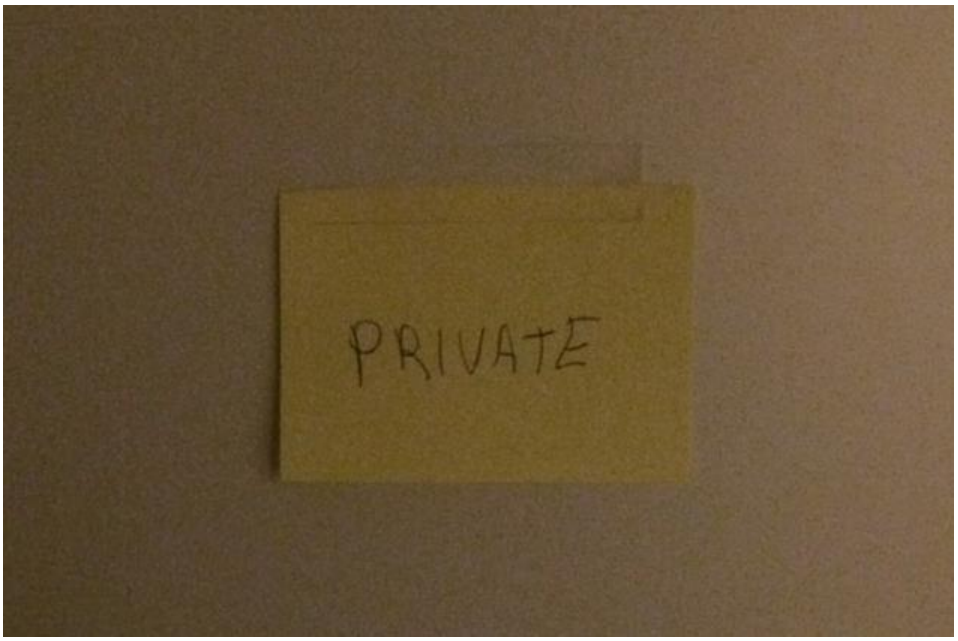

Figure 19 by Roosa. Sign on bedroom door indicating that it was a no-zone for the guests.

Regardless of the additions, modifications or changes mentioned above, when I asked about changes, systematically all hosts first denied having made any. When I kept asking, they admitted a little changes to the physical home.

> Roosa: *Have you modified this home somehow after you started hosting or because of it?*
>
> Teemu: *Not even a little bit.*
>
> Roosa: *Not at all. Okay. Is there anything that would tell a random person that walks in that this home is on Airbnb?*
>
> Teemu: *No. At least I don't thinks there is. Maybe that pränikkä*[11] *that I got. That might be the only thing that tells that this is on Airbnb. I mean the one that I got when I was a Superhost twenty times in a row.*
>
> Roosa: *So you would normally have your Wi-Fi password on the wall?*

[11] *pränikkä* is a slang word in Finnish. In this particular case it means a trophy given as a reward.

> Teemu: *Yeah I would not. That is maybe another thing. But you can quickly turn it around.*

Teemu, like most of the host, was quick to make sure that he does not change his home because of Airbnb. It was common, that the first reaction was to say that there were no changes made to the home. Then, when I asked a more specific question or worded it differently there indeed were changes. One example of a different question can be seen in the citation above: "Is there anything that would tell a random person that walks in that this home is on Airbnb?", and others include "Have you fulfilled any of the guests' wishes?", and "Would the Airbnb room have another purpose if you wouldn't host?". In the case of the last one, other uses were "normal guestroom", a home office, hobby room and a library.

Even if changes were admitted to, the hosts made sure to mention that they would not make any changes if they themselves did not want them. Johannes put this into words:

> Johannes: *I would not modify this in any way just based on the guests' wishes. So if I don't really want it myself then I would do nothing at all.*

As this section shows, the guests' wishes were often fulfilled, even if the hosts started with denying any changes or modifications to the home. However, from the citation above we can see how Johannes emphasizes his control over the changes in the home: if he does not want to modify something, he will not. He is the master of the home, not the guests.

The hosts also made it clear that none of the changes were permanent. This can be seen in Teemu's answer above, where he states that the Wi-Fi board (Figure 20) can be "quickly turned around", and so, easily hidden. The reversibility and impermanency was the key to the changes that the hosts did made. Furniture, curtains, objects, signs, could all be taken down or changed back if the hosts wished so. The use of the words "modify" (*muokata*) and "addition" (*lisäys*), also speak for the impermanency. "Change" (*muuttaa*, *muutos*) as a word could be understood as meaning more permanent change, than just modification, and thus might affect why the hosts did not use it as much. However, it should be noted, that I myself used the word "modify" more than "change" while asking the interview questions and undoubtedly that affected the words the interviewees used.

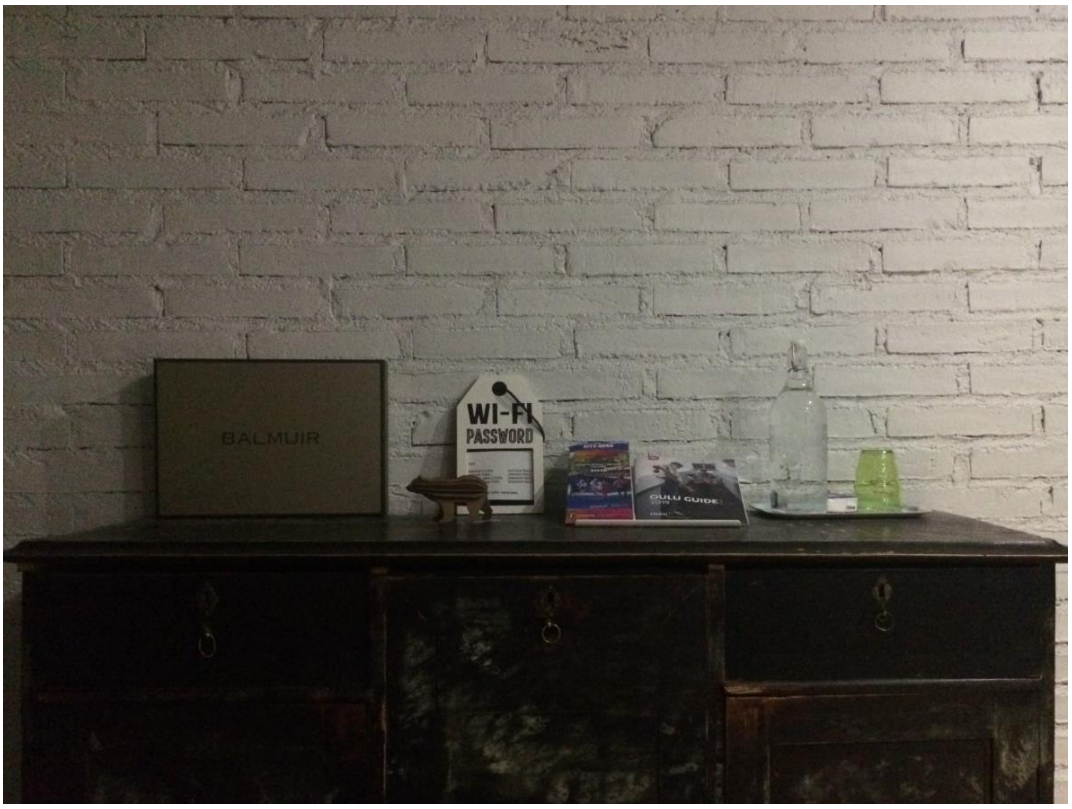

Figure 20 by Roosa. Small things that differentiate this room from a regular guestroom: WIFI-password board, brochures, and a tray with water bottle, tissues paper and glasses.

The denial of change the hosts projected might be because the changes were so small that the hosts did not regard them as changes. However, there might be another explanation. When discussing the home, the hosts stressed the power they had over it. The home is their kingdom and they have the rein over it. The idea of making changes in order to please other people was rejected by the hosts. Making changes for the guests would mean giving up some if that power. When taking this in to account the denial of any changes, physical or behavioral, makes perfect sense.

There was pride in the way the hosts talked about not making any changes. From the strong denial, I deduce that the idea of changing the home according to some other people's wishes was regarded as appalling or contemptible by the hosts. The material home was such a peaceful safe haven and belonged to the hosts (whether or not the home was legally owned) that not being the one deciding on the changes was ridiculous. Curiously, the changes in behavior did not get the same response that the changes to the physical home did. Next, the behavioral changes are under discussion.

6.2 Behavioral Changes in the Home

Changes to behavior included being more quiet during the both morning and night, cleaning more before the guests' arrival, keeping ones' clothes on and being more aware of ones surroundings. Unlike in the last section, the behavioral changes where mostly easily admitted to. In this section, the most common behavioral changes are discussed one by one, each followed by an analyzation. At the end, I examine the privacy of the guests and the different responses the hosts had to physical and behavioral changes.

Here Jani was asked if he changes his behavior at home when there are Airbnb guests present:

> Jani: *Sure. I sure change [laughs]. There would be very few guest coming here if I would behave with guests the same way I behave when I am here alone.*

Compared to the adamant denial of physical changes, changing one's behavior was not seen in such a negative light. Above Jani easily says that he "sure changes" his behavior or very few guests would come to his home. Answers from the other research participants were less extreme but they easily mentioned the changes they had noticed in their behavior and in their daily routines. A more common answer was less all-encompassing than Jani's: to be quieter. Some hosts specified that they did not play music so loudly and as late as they normally would when there are guests present. Others said they did not start making noise in the kitchen as early as usually so that they don't disturb the guests.

Another common answer was cleaning more. Jani said that the biggest difference between his private space and the shared spaces in the home was that the latter was much cleaner and more in order than the former. He also said that he cleans after himself more when there are guests visiting, for example he does the dishes right away instead of leaving them in the sink. There was a common understanding that one needed to clean for guests. The cleaning was most likely motivated by behavioral models learned before and endorsed by the Airbnb grading system. Some of the interviewees took great pride in being *Superhosts*, and the status was lost if the average grade dropped under 4.8 stars when five stars was the maximum. This certainly encouraged extra cleaning, if one aspired to keep the *Superhost* status.

However, whatever the motivating factor was, there was a shared experience among the hosts that the more intensified cleaning made the home more comfortable. Johannes is a great example of this kind of thinking:

> Johannes: *I am that sort of person who likes and wants my home to be tidy. If it is not I don't really enjoy myself there and that is not a good thing. […] this is now a little bit more tidy than earlier, before this Airbnb accommodation, and I have liked a lot that it makes me really clean and tidy up the place well.*

The result of the cleaning – a cleaner home – was a positive change to the inhabitants of the home. Thus, taking part in Airbnb hospitality made the home better in some ways, making it cozier and making the inhabitants *feel* cozier in the home.

The atmosphere of the home was affected by the arrival of the guests, according to some hosts. Some said that they were more aware of their surroundings or did not relax quite as much as usual when the guests were present. Jani is one of these hosts that felt the difference in the atmosphere:

> Roosa: *Does it feel different to be at home when there are guests here?*
>
> Jani: *It sure feels! It always feels like, there is that little… you are a little bit more aware, but, more in the beginning, nowadays not very much. […]*
>
> Roosa: *Yeah. Can you relax in the same way?*
>
> Jani: *No, of course not. But I* can *relax, yes, but you can't relax in the same way.*

The last notable effect the hosting activity had on the behavior of the research participants was that the guests' presence restricted the hosts' freedom in their home some. Ritva said that hosting "narrows the 'freedom dimension'" because she likes to be considerate and for example not play music too loud. In addition, hosts mentioned restrictions to their life, such as not being able to invite friends to stay when the guestroom was already spoken for. One host said that her mother does not like to visit her while the guests are there. The freedom was also affected in a way that is more physical. The Airbnb guestroom was considered the guests private space during the stay and the hosts refrained from going in

the room during that time. The way they talked about it gave an impression that there was a common understanding that it would be rude or intrusive to do so. They expected the guests to respect the privacy of the host's bedroom and returned the courtesy.

> Eero: *We do not even take a glance at the room when there are guests there or guest's stuff, even if they are visiting the city centre, I don't… You need to respect them that much that if there are… that we don't, it is their room then.*
>
> Roosa: *Mm m. By the way, is there a lock on the door?*
>
> Eero: *No. So that is, they need to trust us and we don't have a lock anywhere other than the bathroom either, so we need to trust them too.*
>
> Roosa: *And they can use the other spaces [of the house] except your bedroom?*
>
> Eero: *Yeah. We don't even show them that, we just say that this is where we sleep and the door is closed. So that is kind of like ours, if we would need to escape somewhere, that's where we go.*

The way Eero says, "we do not even glance at it" and "it is their room then", above and how Johannes says, "of course when there are guests there that room is completely at their disposal, not anybody else's", tells about the seriousness they place on the privacy of the guests. Referring to the guest room, Teemu implied that there would need to be a justified reason to go in while there are guests staying over. Going in to the guests' room without asking would be a breach on their privacy and an act that was not acceptable.

One explanation for why the guests' privacy is so highly valued might be found in Eero's answer above: the reciprocity and trust between the hosts and the guests. The host respects the guest's privacy, because he or she expects his or her own privacy to be respected in return. They do not want to break that trust, perhaps because the trust can be broken both ways. Whatever the motivating factor is to keep the trust, it is clear that trust exists as well as the respect for the guest's privacy.

Another explanation might be the fact that the Airbnb platform advertises their rooms as "private" and the guests pay for getting that "private room". The rules, the rights and the responsibilities, and the exchange of money that Airbnb obligates make the hosts and

guests interactions clear and straightforward (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015). It is clearly stated on the Airbnb website or mobile phone application when one makes a reservation, what one is paying for, and the hosts should deliver. From this sample, all the hosts are selling a "private room", so private room is what the guests are expecting. The hosts should respect that, and according to this study, they do. Both a fear of bad feedback and so losing potential guests and certain cultural values regarding respect are most likely at work here.

Compared to the reactions to physical changes to the home, the behavioral changes where thought as common courtesy, almost obvious. The hosts did have the note of dismissal when talking about behavioral changes as they did with physical changes but it was less noticeable. It seemed that the physical home was more "sacred" or untouchable than one's routines and thus should not be changed, while behavior did not hold the same position. Especially the irreversible and permanent changes were frowned upon and because behavior can hardly be regarded as permanent, perhaps the changes in that area were not so "damning" in the hosts' opinion.

The only exception to this were children. The hosting was fully depended on the children's approval. The children had the power to end the Airbnb hosting activity, if they wished so, because they were the most important thing to their parents and to their parents' meanings of home, like concluded in chapter four. The children's routines were regarded as more important than the parents' were. The hosting activity could not disturb the children's routines, because the parents would not let it. The hosting activity was planned around the children's routines, not the other way around. If the plans ever failed, it was not mentioned in the interviews. This supports the position the children enjoy in the home. The failure to mention any disturbance to children's lives tells that in general, children are supposed to be the most important thing to a parent, and perhaps mentioning any disturbances would make the person a bad parent. Children also affected the hosting activity in the way that if there were going to be a new addition to the family, the hosting would have to be put on a pause at least, while the baby was small.

6.3 Justifying the Change

The two previous subchapters give a good picture that there indeed are changes in the home due to Airbnb hosting. As I discussed before, changing the home was not seen as desirable. However, these changes were often justified somehow. Several hosts mentioned that the guests are entitled to certain things because they pay to stay at the home. These things are cleanliness, peace and quiet, and private space. I argue that when the hosts could not avoid or deny the change, they needed to justify it. The main justifications are the monetary exchange that happens between the host and the guest, and the comparison to "normal" (*tavallinen*) guests.

Lampinen and Ikkala (2015: 1041-1042) argue that the monetary exchange brings clarity to the interactions between hosts and guests. The interactions feel less obligatory, compared to, for example Couch Surfing, where it is expected to spend at least some time together. It could be said that Airbnb is less actual sharing and more like commodity exchange; because of the money changing owners, no interaction is felt obligatory. (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015: 1033-1034.)

I noticed another function the monetary exchange has in Airbnb hosting. Because the guests pay for the room, they are also entitled to some things. The money does not only buy the one "private room" listed on Airbnb. In addition to the room, the guests purchase the right to "live like a local" (Benner April 19 2016) and "belong anywhere" (Airbnb January 30 2017), like they would be at home. This includes the right to use the kitchen, bathroom and living room and whatever spaces or appliances the host has listed on the profile as well as the right to be at peace and sleep well.

> Ritva: […] *I like to be considerate, so that the person can enjoy oneself, so I don't go crazy with playing music or hang out here all night long or so on… in a way the "freedom dimension" narrows. You need to use your brain. But I think that if the guest pays for his or her accommodation, the guest has the right for it and I have voluntarily started hosting. But of course it narrows a little bit.*

Here Ritva answered my question about whether she changed her behavior when she had Airbnb guests staying in her home. She listed changes such as not playing music so loudly

or making other noises in the middle of the night. She ends by stating that the paying guests have the right to have a good night's sleep in a quiet house whereas she voluntarily took part in Airbnb hosting – insinuating that she signed up for changing her behavior, and "narrowing her freedom dimension" is justified or even expected.

Another way of justifying the changes was talking about the "normal guests". The hosts commented either that the "normal guests" would also enjoy the changes they have made to the guestroom or they described the changes in their behavior as something they would do also if "normal guests" were visiting, even if they would not take part in Airbnb hosting. The normal guests (or the "real guests" like two hosts let slip a couple of times companied with embarrassed laughter) in this context are friends and relatives.

> Eero: *The room feels more cozy when it has some things to look at, not so empty and cold.* ***When we think about it as a guestroom, not only Airbnb, but generally, we think more about what people would generally like in a room, like they do like curtains!*** *[laughter] Little things like that… [the guestroom] does not drastically differ from our other décor, but we need to… no we want to think what the consensus about decoration is to normal people. We want the room to be so that people enjoy it, even if it does no match our own vision perfectly.*
>
> Roosa: *Why? Why decorate to please other people?*
>
> Eero: *Well… we want to… and* ***I am not just talking about Airbnb, but we want people to visit us****. If someone is visiting Oulu, it would be nice if this would be the first choice… that they want to sleep here… because it is nice. It's nice when other people think your own home is comfortable.* [Emphasis mine.]

I asked Eero if their guestroom differs from the other rooms in the house. He admitted to little changes (they don't have curtains anywhere else in the house) and said that it is important to them that other people enjoy their home. He later continued that the changes stop at the guestroom, that they do not change the living areas that they themselves use, to please their guests. He made sure that he was talking about other than Airbnb guest, friends and relatives. It was important to Eero that the people he cared about would enjoy his home.

From the way the hosts repeatedly talked about the "normal guests", I deduce that changing the home to other people's preferences was more "acceptable" when the people were friends and family. After all, making money with one's own home was a complex issue to the hosts, and hosting was placed somewhere between work and hobbies. It then makes sense that the changes made to home are justified by saying that loved ones would also benefit from them, not just the Airbnb activity. The behavioral changes when Airbnb guests were visiting were also justified in a similar way; according to Teija: "[…] it [changing behavior] is totally normal, like how other people that live as a family act too, so that you need to also consider others". Many hosts added similar things as Teija when talking about changing behavior for the guests.

6.4 Being in Control and Losing Control

As was presented in chapter four, the research participants viewed home as something that is in their control. Inviting strangers to one's home, could be argued, lessens one's control over it, or at least rises the chances of some disturbances happening. This is a fear non-hosts I have talked with brought forward as a reason why they would never host. The research participants also discussed this when asked why they would stop hosting:

> Roosa: *What are the reasons why you would stop hosting?*
>
> Paula: *Well if something drastic happened. If something was stolen or broken. Like big time.*

Something getting stolen or broken would mean both monetary loss and losing control. If getting income were a big motivator for a specific host, losing monetary would be the exact opposite of what was desired. However, it could be argued, that when it – something getting stolen or broken – happens, it is too late to stop hosting. Insurance most likely helps with the monetary side of things and the chances of something similar happening again soon are small. However what the insurance does not cover, is the feeling of losing control over one's home – that thing that was defined by the hosts as being in the inhabitants control.

Ritva discussed this feeling of losing control of one's home. When I asked Ritva to describe good and bad guests, her answer culminated in respect: good guests follow the rules, bad guests do not respect the home and its rules. The most negative experiences in her Airbnb

"career" were when a guest came in without ringing the doorbell, and another brought his or her own guests without asking. Ritva said she felt unreal, that "this sort of things do not happen in this world". She called them "violations of privacy and respect". In other words, she lost the control of her own home. She lost the power to choose who steps over her threshold: a small but important border or a liminal space between the home and the outside, private and public in the modern western world (Rosselin 1999: 53).

The hosts are aware of the risks yet have still decided to host. Despite Ritva's experiences, she claimed that she "will never stop hosting". Teemu kept hosting even after one of his guests peed on his kitchen floor at night while being drunk and passed out on the living room couch. The hosts see the risks as worth taking. Paula explained that the living expenses in their house are so high and the Airbnb hosting helps so much that something substantial would need to happen that they would stop hosting. Whatever they get out of hosting, whatever motivates them, be it money, company, hobby, or utilizing extra space, the hosts must want that more than they are afraid of losing control of the home.

The lack of control is one of the fears the hosts had, but it is also a reason why the research participants choose Airbnb as a platform. In addition to the Airbnb's insurance policy that brings reassurance, the hosts said that Airbnb is good to use because one can easily *control* it. They said that through Airbnb, hosting is easy. Vilma and Eero commented that if you don't want any guests, you can simply close your calendar. Teija told me, that during her summer vacation, she kept the calendar closed, and opened it only when she did not have any other plans.

In addition to controlling the booking by closing and opening your calendar, one form of control is pricing. This was also one finding in Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) study. They named two ways hosts used pricing in order to control Airbnb, and I detected a third one. First, the hosts used higher than average prices to control the type of guests their home attracts. Pricing the apartment over the average both keeps the "troublemakers" away and attracts educated better off guests (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015: 1041). This way of controlling did not come up in my study, most likely because the homes I chose were average or below average in pricing. Second, cheaper than average pricing was used to attract multiple guests, so that the host have more potential guests to choose from. In my

study, some of the hosts insisted on keeping the price low, but none mentioned the reason to be because they wanted to choose a certain type of guests, but rather to get more guests in general. Finally, the one I detected form my research participants: above average pricing was used to keep the guests away as an alternative to closing the booking calendar totally. The advantages of controlling the guest arrivals via higher pricing include continuous visibility on the website and more profit if the guests do decide to come regardless of the higher price. Maria described this way of controlling:

> Maria: *I also want to have my own free weekends, and that's why I keep the price… I raise the price sometimes because of that. I don't want anyone to book. They book other places then.*
>
> Roosa: *It can also be closed, right?*
>
> Maria: *Yeah, but I want it to show up there on the site. If someone chooses to pay the higher price and come, they can come then.*
>
> Roosa: *Ah yes. So then it's worth it.*
>
> Maria: *With that price I can take them. It is not that huge a price but when you raise it above others then… in a way it makes it so they [guests] don't come all the time.*

One way to control sharing a space with others is time and space zoning (Munro & Madigan 1999). An example of time zoning is that the guests were given certain times when they could use the sauna. Having one's own private room is considered space zoning (Munro & Madigan 1999). I have noted this zoning in my own travels as well. In Cedar Falls, Iowa, the host made sure to tell me when she and her fiancé needed to use the bathroom in the mornings. Any other time, I was welcome to use it as I wished. However, the time zoning rarely came up in the interviews or participatory observation. The division of space was clear from the tour I was given at the beginning of the stay, but rarely one mentioned time related limitations. However, the length of the visit might affect that, and based on my earlier experiences, I believe that if the stay were longer such things as when one can use a shower (if there were only one) would come up.

Even though hosting activity changes the home, affects the behavior of the residents and can cause negative experiences such as discussed above, when the hosting activity – and

the changes – are in control, they are not disturbances. On the contrary, Airbnb hosting brings more good than bad, as can be seen from Paula's determination to host even though she is aware of the risks of theft and vandalism. The research participants see Airbnb as easy to control and thus it does not disturb the home. The controlled hosting activity is just one more hobby or "sensible" thing one does in one's home that is under control.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine how the touristic sharing economy, through Airbnb hosting, shapes the meanings the hosts give to "home", what motivates the hosts to share their "homes" with strangers, and how they manage the changes sharing might bring. To reach this objective I formed three research questions: "What meanings Airbnb hosts give to 'home'", and "What are hosts' reasons for taking part in Airbnb hosting?" and "Does hosting change the home or its meanings somehow and if so, how do hosts manage such changes?"

The theoretical framework I use is a combination of cognitive anthropology and economic anthropology. The interest in human decision-making is what brings these subfields of anthropology together in my thesis. I use Wilk and Cliggett's (2007) social-temporal grid as a frame that organizes the motives in chapter five from self-interested to more altruistic. Strauss and Quinn's (1997) theory of cultural meanings is present in all of my analysis.

I gathered the research material using multiple methods. Nine semi-structured interviews were executed. During those interviews, Airbnb hosts talked about themes concerning their home, the hosting activity, and the guests, took photographs of their homes and made lists. I stayed for one night in four of the hosts homes and did participant observation. Finally, the hosts filled a questionnaire concerning why they decided to start hosting and why they do it now. I formed the questionnaire based on the reasons the hosts gave me during the interviews and e-mailed it to the participants later on. The material was analyzed during and after the fieldwork period.

Based on the material I conclude that my research participants construct their meanings for home along five key axes: (1) the feel of the home, (2) the material home, (3) the family, (4) activity and (5) control. The most common way to describe a home was through positive adjectives: home is safe, peaceful, relaxed and comfortable. The hosts also described how they feel like at home, using primarily the same positive adjectives. The home was also separate from the outside world and work. I argue that the hosts described the ideal home based on the lack of any negative traits mentioned when describing home. Second way to define home was through material. I detected two ways: material objects

creating coziness and as vessels for memories. Home was also seen as a material place that was a work in progress and under the inhabitants care.

Third and fourth ways of giving meaning to home are both connected to people and relationships. In the third, I examine how people and family members create the home, the importance of pets, and the influence of childhood experiences to the creation of meanings of home. I conclude that people, including one's self, are essential to home and that there would be no home without people. Pets are also included in the definition of family, and thus are important to the meanings of home. I also conclude that the experiences the hosts have had in their childhood relating to home and the amount of people they are used to in their home, affect how they see the home now, and how ready they are to let strangers in. Activity is the other way of giving meaning to home relating to people. The home was experienced as the most cozy where there was most activity. It was also important to the home to be functional and in the center of the inhabitants daily activities. The home is both at a central location for life, and the locus of activity.

The last but not the least way of giving meaning to home was control. When my research participants talked of home, they emphasized control in three different ways: the control over the appearance of the home, the freedom to behave as one wishes, and the power to control who comes to the home. I conclude that home is something that is in the inhabitants control and one of the worst things that could happen to the home or in the home is to lose control of the home. Examples of losing control of the home include people coming in uninvited or guests vandalizing the home.

As for the motives for sharing ones home, I gathered the motives that the research participants told me and the ones I detected via participatory observation and organized them using the results from the questionnaire and Wilk & Cliggett's (2007) social-temporal grid. The three most often mentioned motives for sharing one's home are *money*, *extra space* and *hobby*. The *desire to experiment* was connected to the last one, because the hosting that was started out of curiosity often turned into a hobby-like activity. I conclude that the hosts had a complicated relationship with naming money as a motive for sharing one's home. I argue that because the home was regarded as separate from work the aspect of getting income from hosting was troubling to the hosts. I claim that the money also

affected the way Airbnb hosting was placed somewhere between a work and a hobby; hosting was too little work to qualify as a job but getting income was not a feature the hosts gave to a hobby. I noted that the Airbnb room was often regarded as extra space in the home that was without a purpose. The hosts got positive feelings of the increased utility of the space. The extra space was also the only imperative that the hosts needed in order to keep hosting. Following Wilk and Cliggett's (2007) grid, these were the motives that included the least amount of people in the decision-making; self and close family.

The next group of motives consists of *meeting different people* and *company*. The most important motivating factor from these motives was conversations. My findings were similar to Lampinen and Ikkala's (2015) findings: the hosts did not seek for long lasting relationships but temporal meaningful interactions and conversations. The hosts enjoyed meeting different people and cultures, and widening their worldview. These motives moved towards the more altruistic modes of decision-making because they all dealt with host-guest interactions.

The last group of motives for hosting include *supplying accommodation to those who need it* and *reciprocity*. The hosts took into consideration in their decision-making the overall situation of available accommodation in their area. They also wanted to give back to Airbnb because they used it so much for travelling. This idea of reciprocity is common in Couch Surfing, where such reciprocity is expected.

The last topic I examined in this master's thesis is change. I formed four categories: physical change and the denial of it, behavioral changes, justifying the change and being in control. The physical changes to home were as of rule impermanent and reversible: new linen and towels, labels and signs on things guiding the guests, and new furniture. The hosts first denied having made any changes, and saw changing the home to others' wishes undesirable. I argue this is because being in control is so central to the host's understandings of home and thus changing one's home against one's own wishes would mean giving up some of that control.

Behavioral changes were not denied in the same way than the physical were. The behavioral changes consisted of being quieter, not feeling quite as at ease, cleaning more

and restricting their use of their home some. Restrictions included inviting their friends over less, and not using the spaces that were designated to the Airbnb guests while the guests where there (also called space zoning). The space zoning the hosts practiced culminated in respect: the hosts had to respect the guests' spaces and vice versa. This might be due to cultural values regarding respect of personal spaces and/or Airbnb's own rules. The cleaning was seen as a positive change, and the cleaner home was at large considered cozier and more feelings of at-homeness were experienced in the clean home.

In the third category I discussed the justification of change. I argue that if the hosts failed at denying the changes they had made to the home, they needed to justify them somehow. Common justifications were *money* and *normal guests.* The hosts thought that the money the hosts spent on the room made the guests entitled to some things, such as peace and quiet and clean home. They also explained the changes saying that (1) "normal guests" would like the changes too, and that (2) it was normal to be considerate when living with other people, for example family. The first argument insinuated that it was more acceptable to change the home for loved one's than it was because of strangers. The second equated Airbnb guests and family together, and then making the same argument than the last one.

Control was a powerful theme through the whole thesis. Losing control of the home was considered one of the worst things that could happen. However, the hosts thought that Airbnb was easy to control. I argue that the Airbnb activity that is experienced as being under the host's control does not disturb the home or the inhabitants and their activities. On the contrary, Airbnb hosting made the home feel cozier for multiple reasons: because of (1) the cleaner home was considered cozier, (2) the company and conversations the host had without having to leave the home, and (3) the compliments the hosts got from the guests. It could also be argued that the extra income was used mostly in the home; the inhabitants' daily expenses, mortgage, to cover the Airbnb expenses or for getting something extra for the children or oneself. Following this thought, (4) the added income and these acts might make the atmosphere in the home even more positive.

Negative sides were (1) the possibility to lose control over one's home – stealing, vandalism and general rude behavior in the home the guests might perform –; and (2) that sometimes the Airbnb hosting felt like work when there were many guests. When

comparing the positive and negative changes Airbnb hosting brings or could bring to home, I must conclude that while the hosting activity shapes and changes the home and its meanings in certain ways, the hosting activity and the meanings of home are not in conflict but support each other.

What next? It would be interesting to examine the guests' side in this context: do they experience feelings of at-homeness in the Airbnb homes as Airbnb advertising suggests? Another interesting theme is one that was inspired by Lampinen and Ikkala (2015): One of the weaknesses of Airbnb that they bring up is the bubble of like-minded people. Hosts and guests both prefer to choose Airbnb users that are similar to themselves, and the Airbnb company seems to support this, rather than try to make different people meet and get to know each other (Lampinen & Ikkala 2015). I see this as contrary to the idea of travelling widening people's perspectives and tolerance. After all, tourism and travel have had ambiguous aims such as world peace from the beginning.

The Covid-19 pandemic brings more interesting themes to the table such as how the hosts have adapted to the change in travel regulations. From the Airbnb website and YouTube channel, we can already see some coping mechanisms such as online hosting, hosting remote workers and hosting health care professionals (see for example Airbnb July 21 2020). Losing guests must have affected the hosts financially and those effects would be interesting to document. They would give concrete "evidence" the hosting had on the life if the hosts. I imagine the loss might also affect the positive view the hosts had on Airbnb when it brought extra income.

Because I left out the angle of tourism anthropology, that too would be an enthralling point of view from which Airbnb hosting and the home could be examined. After all, the host often act as local guides, both giving recommendations and showing the guests around while the home acts as an accommodation business. Furthermore, like in all tourism, there are effects on the destination region that could be examined more than I did here. There is always more fascinating phenomena in the world than one has time to study, and one has to make decisions. Those decisions are based on our interests that our earlier experiences in life and the happenings in the world shape. Dare I say our *cultural schemas* guide us in

our paths as researchers. This thesis here is a personal starting point for me – the first piece of candy in an endless candy store.

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Johannes, 35-39 years, interviewed in November 2019, Oulu.

Maria, 40-44 years, interviewed in May 2019, Lahti.

Paula, 35-39 years, interviewed in May 2019, Hyvinkää.

Ritva, 40-44 years, interviewed in May 2019, Oulu.

Teemu, 50-54 years, interviewed in November 2019, Oulu.

Teija, 40-44 years, interviewed in September 2019, Oulu.

Vilma and Eero, both 30-34 years, interviewed in April 2019, Oulu.

Participatory observation

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The case interview framework

Background

1. **Tell me about yourself. (education, work, family…)**

2. **Tell me about your Airbnb hosting. When have you started and how does it work?**

   I want to find out at least:
   1. How long has hosted via Airbnb and what is the hosting like.
   2. Average number of visitors, how long they stay and where are they from.
   3. How does interact with visitors, does spend time together. Any further interaction after visiting?
   4. Has participated in other kinds of hosting (couchsurfing).
   5. Has used Airbnb as a guest.
   6. How many locations owns.
   7. Is this the first home that is in Airbnb.
   8. Do the neighbors know about the hosting?
   9. Is it work? A hobby?

Reasons for taking part in the Airbnb hosting

3. **Tell me why did you decide to take part in Airbnb hosting? (Any pros and cons?)**

   Does any of these come up in the answers:
   1. How important is the extra income?
   2. Extra space.
   3. Meeting new people.
   4. Need for company and loneliness.
   5. Meeting other cultures.
   6. Learned models from home.
   7. Passion for hosting.
   8. Sustainability, sharing economy and collaborative consumption.

   Possible questions to help specifying the answers:

1. How is the extra income used?
2. Is meeting new people or cultures important at all?

3. Are sharing economy or collaborative consumption familiar terms? (They are related to sustainability and the idea of using existing resources better instead of producing or buying new ones.) Has this impacted your reasoning at all?

Home

4. **What is home?**
    1. What is home like?
    2. Is a home positive thing?
    3. Is this place your home? Is it your only home?
    4. Describe ideal home.
    5. Is your own home ideal? Are you trying to make it one? How?

5. **Make a list of words that come to mind when thinking of home (approx. 10)**
    1. Let's go through with it together (optional)
    2. What room do you think of when you think of home?
    3. What kind of homes have you had before?

6. **Have you modified your home somehow after you started hosting? Give an example. (Possibility to walk around while answering)**
    1. What changes have been made for guests?
    2. Any new plans?
    3. How much would you change for your guests?
    4. Something you would never do?
    5. Is decoration and interior design important to you?
    6. Is there something you would do if you didn't host people?
    7. Do you look for inspiration? Where?

Guests and the home

7. **What kind of guests have you had? (If not answered in question no 2)**
    1. What is a good guest like? What about a bad?

8. **What kind of feedback have you gotten from guests about your home?**
    1. The Best and the worst comment.
    2. Have the comments affected how you see your home?
    3. Has the home been modified because of the comments?
    4. Does the number of guests affect to what the home feels like? Is the home better or do you appreciate it more when there are guests or when there aren't?

9. **Are there areas in the home that are reserved only to the guests?**
    1. What about the contrary?
    2. Do these areas differ from other areas somehow? Why?

3. Are they as homely?

Pictures

10. Take a picture of three spots or things in the house you particularly like.
   1. Why these?
   2. Are they from an area that the guests have access to?

11. Let's go through some pictures. Pick one. Why that one? Is it homely? (We can skip this one if we run out of time or energy.)

Appendix 2

Questionnaire about the importance of the reasons to participate in Airbnb hosting

1. **First write down your name**
2. **Organize the following reasons to start Airbnb hosting according to their importance. When I first started, the most important reason was…**
   1=the most important
   8=the least important

   Money
   Extra space
   Supplying accommodation to those who need it
   Desire to experiment
   Hobby / way of life
   Meeting different people
   Company
   Reciprocity / the sharing economy

3. **Organize the following reasons to participate in Airbnb hosting according to their importance. I host now because…**
   1=the most important
   8=the least important

   Money
   Extra space
   Supplying accommodation to those who need it

Desire to experiment
Hobby / way of life
Meeting different people
Company
Reciprocity / the sharing economy

4. **How important are the next statements regarding your Airbnb hosting?**
   0=not important
   4=very important

   4.1 There is (extra) space in my home, which is easy to rent out via Airbnb
   4.2 My conversations with guests
   4.3 For me, Airbnb hosting is a hobby or lifestyle
   4.4 Encountering different cultures
   4.5 The extra income is nice and relatively easy to get
   4.6 I want to supply accommodation to people
   4.7 I want my home to have a high occupancy rate
   4.8 I get money to support covering home expenses
   4.9 I want to try what Airbnb hosting is like
   4.10 I also use Airbnb as a guest and by hosting I give back
   4.11 I wish more human contacts in my daily life

5. **Something to comment on? Tell me.**